



National Perspective of Nutrition Policy Successes, Challenges, and Promise

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For Bob

- Honor to participate in this Aging CT Summit
- Commend your interest in the vital issue of nutrition
- It is vital that federal and state policies do what they can to promote good nutrition to enhance the health of older adults and persons with disabilities
- That was the message of the 2022 White House Conference on Hunger Nutrition and Health– to end hunger and improve nutrition by 2030

Nutrition Policy Today in DC

- In some ways at a crossroads.
- Confronting serious issues around funding that are unresolved even as we start a new fiscal year (FY 2024)
- All federal nutrition programs are operating under a Continuing Resolution which ensures funding through November 17
- Funding is provided at last year's level of FY 23.
- That is important as some in Congress sought to cut funding back to FY 22 levels. For one program: The Older Americans Act nutrition program that would mean a cut of \$100 million

Advocacy messaging

- It is vital that funding levels not go below FY 23.
- It is also vital that the government not shut down because it could impact at least two important nutrition programs SNAP and WIC.
- You need to send the message to your Congressional delegation. Keep the government open and fund our programs at FY 23 levels or better
- Newly elected House Speaker did indicate that he is looking to get a second CR passed.
 - For how long? Jan or April?
 - At which funding level? That of the 1st CR or something lower?
 - Answers will be coming but does not change the message

DC Slowdown is affecting nutrition programs

- Farm bill: stalled.
 - 80% of funding relates to domestic nutrition programs. Many important to older adults: SNAP, Commodity Supplemental Food Program, Senior Farmers Market
- SNAP: up for renewal this year
 - Used to be routine and bipartisan. Nothing is guaranteed in this environment
- Ideal goal would be to extend all these programs and provide them with sufficient resources to reach all those it is to serve
- There are those who want to weaken programs such as SNAP with new work requirements.
- Important to stand up for these proven programs
- Especially important is Rep. Hayes on the Agriculture committee



Expanding Access to nutrition counseling

- Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) Act
 - Expand Medicare coverage of MNT to chronic conditions beyond renal disease and diabetes
- Treat and Reduce Obesity Act (TROA)
 - Has been reintroduced many times, but getting attention now with new weight loss drugs
 - Medicare is not allowed to cover obesity drugs
 - Expands Medicare coverage of nutrition counseling and treatments for obesity

Older Americans Act updates

- Major news here was issuance of regulations for first time since 1988.
- Needed to address the realities of post pandemic and ongoing issues around disasters
- Key element of these draft regs is their call to do three things in nutrition space
 - Maintain flexibility in the kinds of meals that can be served—including and especially grab and go type meals
 - Expand the definition of a homebound person who can get a home delivered meal
 - And add malnutrition prevention to area agency on aging plans
- A quick shout out to Senator Murphy for again sponsoring a senate resolution officially recognizing Malnutrition Awareness week last month



Nutrition Policy Looking Ahead

- The Older Americans Act up for renewal in 2024
 - Nutrition program is its largest program
- All its purposes need to be supported
 - to reduce hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition; enhance socialization; and promote health and well-being
 - Can expect that to be a focus
- Happily, both Senator Murphy and Representatives Hayes are on committees responsible for producing this bill

In Conclusion

- Overarching is need to replace food insecurity, hunger, and malnutrition with **nutrition security**
- Defined as consistent access, availability, and affordability of foods and beverages that promote well-being, prevent disease, and, if needed, treat disease
 - Will improve health of our nation
 - Will prevent number of chronic diseases affecting older adults
 - Vital to this change is a paradigm shift towards healthy foods