

The Access to Nutritious Meals for Young Children Act of 2009, S. 2749/H.R. 4402

For many children, the child care program they attend is their primary source of food. Good nutrition in the first years of life is essential for early brain development. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) allows child care centers, family child care homes, and Head Start and Early Head Start programs to offer wholesome and nutritious meals. With the growth in child poverty, the high cost of nutritious foods, and the link between children's health and obesity, as well as overall food insecurity among families and communities, CACFP is more important than ever as an essential support to families and children.

By providing nutritious meals in child care settings and technical assistance on good nutrition to child care providers, CACFP not only helps ensure that children eat well and learn about healthy foods but also provides parents an opportunity to understand the importance of sound nutrition and provides child care centers and family child care homes with valuable support. There are a number of improvements that would make better meals available to more children.

About The Access to Nutritious Meals for Young Children Act of 2009, S. 2749/H.R. 4402

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Representative Paul D. Tonko (D-NY) have introduced legislation that would:

- Increase CACFP reimbursement rates for child care centers and family child care homes by 20 cents per meal and 10 cents per snack to help offset the high cost of nutritious foods.
- Add a third meal or snack option for children in child care, helping to cover the costs of food for children who are in care for longer hours while their parents patch together work opportunities.
- Reduce the threshold for the percentage of children in an area who must be in low-income families for a family child care provider to be eligible for higher reimbursements for all of the children in his or her program from 50 to 40 percent.
- Increase the administrative reimbursement rate for CACFP-sponsoring organizations by \$5 per family child care home per month to ensure that sponsors can provide support to child care centers and family child care homes.
- Streamline and simplify burdensome program and paperwork requirements for states, sponsoring organizations, child care providers, and parents.