



## Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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January 20, 1998

TO: Members  
Joint Committee on Finance

FROM: Bob Lang, Director

SUBJECT: Assembly Bill 581: Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children  
-- Nutrition Services and Administration Funding

### CURRENT LAW

The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) distributes federal funds the state receives from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to local agencies that provide food and nutrition education services at no cost to persons enrolled in the women, infants and children (WIC) supplemental food program. Pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women, infants and children under age five in households with income under 185% of the federal poverty level who are identified as being a nutritional "risk" are eligible for the program. Average monthly participation in the program was approximately 109,000 individuals in federal fiscal year (FFY) 1996-97.

Federal WIC funding is provided through two separate grants. Food grants support the cost of food products purchased by WIC recipients. Nutrition services and administration (NSA) grants support other WIC-related costs, as specified in federal law and state policy.

In general, NSA funding can be used to support the costs of nutrition education, outreach, training, staff certification and salaries for administrators, nurses, nutritionists and translators. In addition, NSA funds can be used to support the program's automated food payment system and client information management system. In awarding NSA funds to local agencies, DHFS estimates each agency's monthly caseload and then calculates an annual allotment based on the caseload estimate. Dividing the total monthly NSA allotment by the caseload estimate yields an amount that represents an average monthly per capita allotment to support each agency's NSA costs.

The following table summarizes average per capita NSA funding for FFY 1993-94 through 1997-98.

**Average Monthly Per Capita NSA Allotments  
FFY 1993-94 through 1997-98**

1997-98	\$9.22
1996-97	9.63
1995-96	9.48
1994-95	9.47
1993-94	9.12

As this table illustrates, DHFS reduced the average per capita NSA allotment from \$9.63 in FFY 1996-97 to \$9.22 per person in FFY 1997-98. This reduction reflects: (a) the elimination of supplemental GPR support for the program that, until FFY 1997-98, had been available to support NSA costs; and (b) the overbudgeting of available funds in 1996-97, resulting in a program deficit of approximately \$360,000.

**SUMMARY OF BILL AND FISCAL ESTIMATE**

Assembly Bill 581 would provide \$269,500 GPR in 1997-98 and \$539,000 GPR in 1998-99. This funding could be used to increase NSA per capita payments to all WIC agencies. Based on current caseload projections, it is estimated that this funding would be sufficient to increase the average monthly per capita payment by approximately \$.47, effective January 1, 1998, to \$9.69 per month.

Assembly Bill 581 was referred to the Joint Committee on Finance immediately following the bill's introduction.

Prepared by: Amie T. Goldman

MO# \_\_\_\_\_

BURKE	Y	N	A
DECKER	Y	N	A
JAUCH	Y	N	A
SHIBILSKI	Y	N	A
COWLES	Y	N	A
PANZER	Y	N	A
SCHULTZ	Y	N	A
ROSENZWEIG	Y	N	A
GARD	Y	N	A
OURADA	Y	N	A
HARSDORF	Y	N	A
ALBERS	Y	N	A
PORTER	Y	N	A
KAUFERT	Y	N	A
LINTON	Y	N	A
COGGS	Y	N	A

AYE \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ ABS \_\_\_\_\_