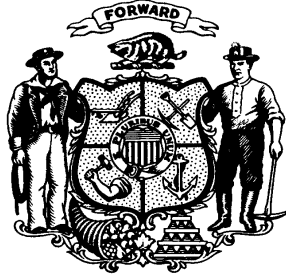


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October 1, 2010

Mr. Kevin Concannon, Under Secretary
Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Under Secretary Concannon:

I am writing on behalf of the Wisconsin Joint Legislative Council's Special Committee on Public Assistance Program Integrity. The Special Committee is directed to study current laws, rules, and policies relating to fraud prevention, detection, investigation, and prosecution, and the current fraud penalty structure, in public assistance programs in Wisconsin, including public assistance provided through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

A member of the committee has raised a concern that counties that administer assistance under SNAP are not permitted to refer a family to a child protective services agency if the county finds that the family has not used its SNAP benefits for an extended period to determine if the children for whom the benefits are provided are being maltreated. According to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, information relating to recipients of SNAP benefits may be disclosed only under specified conditions, and none of the conditions permit disclosure to a child protective services agency. I ask that your agency please consider whether there are circumstances under which it would be appropriate to permit an agency to refer a family to a child protective services agency to determine whether failure to use SNAP benefits is an indication that a child is suffering maltreatment and recommend legislation or other changes to address this issue.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Senator Bob Jauch, Chair
Special Committee on Public Assistance
Program Integrity

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