



WISCAP 2021-2022 Legislative and Advocacy Agenda

WISCAP is a statewide association of Wisconsin's 16 Community Action Agencies and two single purpose agencies working to fight poverty in Wisconsin. WISCAP and its members support community-based solutions to poverty to create economic equity and opportunity. As a leader in efforts to address poverty in Wisconsin, we keenly understand the need for policies that enable economic equality and that provide pathways for the Community Action Network to address needs of Wisconsinites with low income and low wealth. The following set of policies represent WISCAP's- in partnership with other stakeholders- priorities for the coming legislative session.

Comprehensive Measures to Fight Poverty

Re-Introduction and Passage of the Wisconsin Opportunity Act. WISCAP will work with members of the Wisconsin State Senate and Assembly to re-introduce and pass omnibus legislative package designed to provide transformational investments that reduce poverty and fundamentally improve people's economic circumstances. This bill will further the goal of addressing the systemic barriers to achieving economic stability by providing housing, health, job training, and income supports.

Wisconsin CSBG Supplement. WISCAP will work with members of the Wisconsin State Senate and Assembly for the passage of legislation to create a state supplement to the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program.

Federal Community Services Block Grant Act Reauthorization Act. WISCAP will work with our national partners at the Community Action Partnership and the National Community Action Foundation to ensure passage of federal CSBG reauthorization.

Access to Housing and Shelter

Increased funding to the WI Department of Administration Critical Assistance Program (DOA). WISCAP calls for an increase in this emergency fund from \$280,000 to \$560,000 to support homeless prevention, including rental assistance and foreclosure prevention.

Increased funding for the WI Housing Assistance Program within (DOA). WISCAP calls for an increase in this fund from \$300,000 to \$1,200,000. HAP funds can be used for housing and support services

Passage of the Federal Homeless Children and Youth Act. WISCAP supports this bi-partisan legislation to align HUD homeless assistance eligibility criteria with criteria used by most other federal agencies and programs.

Passage of the Federal Emergency Family Stabilization Act. WISCAP supports this bi-partisan legislation which would provide \$800 million emergency fund to help communities address family and youth homelessness. The program would be housed within HHS Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and provide flexible funding to address health and safety needs (including mental health services); housing



assistance; Transportation costs; Childcare; Staffing for outreach, case management, and housing navigation.

Reduce discriminatory barriers to housing access and affordability. WISCAP supports the advancement of policies to extend housing access, reduce discrimination in housing, and empower tenants to advocate on their behalf.

Economic Development

Expansion of broadband infrastructure and affordability. WISCAP will identify opportunities to align and expand funding or programming from the WI Public Service Commission to this priority. WISCAP also calls for the passage of the Federal Rural Broadband Acceleration Act, S.B. 4201 and H.R. 7022 to expand broadband internet access to rural communities.

Specialized funding for minority- and women-owned businesses. WISCAP supports the establishment of programs and funding specifically designed to enable the creation and success of minority- and women-owned businesses in Wisconsin.

Increased funding for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). The Federal CDBG enables local government decision making to reduce poverty by increasing affordable housing access, small business development, and community infrastructure.

Addressing Barriers to Employment

Expansion of the Job and Business Development Program (DWD). WISCAP calls for an increased appropriation from \$200,600 to a minimum of \$1,000,000.

Expansion of Skills Enhancement Program (DCF) WISCAP calls for an increased appropriation from \$250,00 to a minimum of \$750,000. [*] Amend income eligibility of the Skills Enhancement Program.

Expand the availability and affordability of transportation, including greater support to car purchase programs like Jump Start and Work-n-Wheels.

Expand the availability and affordability of quality childcare. WISCAP also supports efforts to increase the childcare supplement for families with low income and priorities of the WI Infant Toddler Policy Project to ensure every low-income family with an infant or toddler will have equitable access to affordable, high quality, culturally and linguistically responsive early care and education.

Wisconsin Community Action Program Association



Access to Health Supports

WISCAP supports expanding Medicaid eligibility for adults to 138% of Federal Poverty Level. These guidelines determine who is eligible for low to no-cost health care. For example, a single parent with one child is currently ineligible for Badger Care if they have a full-time job that pays more than \$8.29 per hour.

Federal Community Action Opioid Response Act. WISCAP will work with our national partners at the Community Action Partnership and the National Community Action Foundation to ensure passage of federal legislation to better coordinate community action agency resources and opioid response services.

WISCAP supports efforts to expand primary care availability and promote the expansion of mental health treatment availability and accessibility, substance abuse treatment availability and accessibility, and suicide prevention efforts and technical assistance for farmers who are struggling.

For more information, contact Brad Paul, bpaul@wiscap.org, (608) 244-0466