



State Senator Sheila Harsdorf

Date: October 25, 2017

To: Senate Committee on Public Benefits, Licensing and State-Federal Relations

From: Senator Sheila Harsdorf

RE: SB 416 – relating to FoodShare healthy eating incentive pilot program and making an appropriation

Dear Chair Kapenga and Committee Members:

Thank you for holding a public hearing on Senate Bill 416 (SB 416) which seeks to create a pilot program for FoodShare eligible households to receive discounts on purchases of produce and other healthy food options.

It is well known that what we eat has an effect on our health. We encourage our kids to eat their vegetables and insurance companies provide incentives for engaging in healthy habits. We often hear about the challenges that those on FoodShare have in purchasing fresh produce. A USDA Nutrition Assistance Program Report shows, the most promising approaches to getting individuals to eat healthier, and thus have healthier outcomes, are to provide discounts and target merchandizing and concurrent promotions. SB 416 gets to the heart of this and creates an incentive for FoodShare recipients to make healthier choices.

This pilot program would provide 2000 FoodShare eligible households in both urban and rural Wisconsin with discounts on purchases of produce and other healthy food options at participating retailers. Participants would be able to take advantage of up to 50% off on produce as well as various discounts on other healthy food products. Voluntary participants would receive a healthy eating card, access to a mobile app and website, and weekly emails for that week's discounts. The healthy eating card is presented to the cashier at checkout and any foods available for discounts would be automatically deducted from the total at the time of sale.

In addition, SB 416 directs DHS to contract with an independent research entity to conduct a study that will analyze the efficacy of the pilot in affecting food purchases and the overall health of the participating families.

This pilot will enable us to test a group of volunteers on FoodShare to determine if encouraging the purchase of healthy foods can result in better eating habits and healthier outcomes.

I urge your support and prompt action on this legislation. Thank you! I welcome the opportunity to answer any question you may have.



MIKE ROHRKASTE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 55TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Senate Bill 416

Relating to: FoodShare healthy eating incentive pilot program and making an appropriation

Testimony of State Representative Mike Rohrkaste

Senate Committee on Public Benefits, Licensing and State-Federal Relations

October 25th, 2017

Thank you, Chair Kapenga and members of the Senate Committee on Public Benefits, Licensing and State-Federal Relations, for holding this public hearing on Senate Bill 416.

Engaging in healthy eating habits is common practice to many Wisconsinites. Thousands of us do it every day, some because of the health benefits, and others because we may receive incentives to do so through our health insurance companies or workplace wellness programs. We know that eating healthy reduces our chances of chronic diseases and helps to keep our bodies fit. But, for many Wisconsinites, especially those on FoodShare, eating healthy isn't necessarily an option. This legislation creates a pilot program that seeks to target FoodShare recipients with discounts and promotions for fresh produce and other healthy foods with the goal of incentivizing them to make healthier choices.

The pilot program will serve 2000 eligible, voluntary FoodShare recipients in both urban and rural Wisconsin to receive discounts on purchases of fresh produce and other healthy food options at participating retailers. Volunteers for the program could receive a healthy eating card or other coupon option that would provide them with options for discounts on healthy products. The participant would present the card or coupon at checkout and would automatically receive a discount on any food included in the program.

Using a "carrot" approach, this legislation seeks to incentivize those on FoodShare benefits to purchase fresh produce and other healthy foods that they may not regularly buy. In addition, the bill requires DHS to contract with an independent research entity to conduct a study that will analyze the pilot and how it affects food purchases and the health of participants. With this study, we will be able to determine whether incentives such as discounts and promotions do actually affect the choices that consumers are making. If so, further legislation would have the ability to give those on FoodShare the ability to become healthier through the purchase of healthy foods and lower their risk for long-term chronic diseases.

Thank you for your time, and I encourage members of the committee to support Senate Bill 416. I am open to answering any questions that you may have.



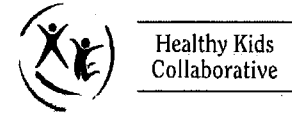
TO: Senate Committee on Public Benefits, Licensing and State-Federal Relations
FROM: Nan Peterson, MS, RN- Director, Child Health Advocacy, UW Health/American Family Children's Hospital
DATE: Wednesday, October 25, 2017
RE: Support for Senate Bill 416, the Healthy Eating Incentives FoodShare Pilot

Good afternoon, my name is Nan Peterson, and as Director of Child Health Advocacy at UW Health/American Family Children's Hospital and Co-chair of the Healthy Kids Collaborative, I am pleased to speak before your committee in support of Senate Bill 416 the FoodShare healthy eating incentive pilot program.

As a pediatric nurse and child health advocate, the words of former Robert Wood Johnson President and CEO, Risa Lavizzo Mourey - "The choices people make depend on the choices they have." - ring very clearly to me. Today in Wisconsin, nearly 20% of children are overweight or obese (*Wisconsin Department of Health Services (2012-2014)*), and we now know that excess weight and low physical activity during childhood predicts significant morbidity and reduced quality of life during later life. Every day, we see children already suffering medical consequences (e.g. type 2 diabetes, fatty liver) of limited food choices necessitated by lack of access to and/or higher cost of healthy nutrition. We live in a country where the inflation adjusted cost of fresh fruits and vegetables has risen nearly 40% in the past 20 years while the cost of a can of Coke has declined by more than 20% (*Wallinga, D., Schoonover, H., & Muller, M. (2009), Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition, 4(1), 3-19*). We live in a community where there are 5 times as many fast food restaurants as there are grocery stores (*Dane County Data: 85.85 fast food restaurants per 100,000 residents; 16.39 grocery stores per 100,000 residents*). Given the multitude of environmental barriers to eating well, it is no wonder that only 9% of kids are eating the recommended 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables every day (*2012 Dane County Youth Assessment: 9.2% of youth in our community are eating 5 or more servings of fruits and veggies a day*).

Initiatives such as the FoodShare Incentive are critical steps toward improving the odds for healthy living for so many of our children and their families. It is a duty for all of us to provide all children with a healthy nutrition and physical activity environment, and the FoodShare Incentive truly changes the choices that are available - particularly for children at highest risk for obesity and its complications. Consequently, on behalf of myself, UW Health, UW Health/American Family Children's Hospital and the Healthy Kids Collaborative, I strongly urge you to support the FoodShare Incentive Pilot Program.

Thank you, Nan Peterson, MS, RN
npeterson@uwhealth.org
608.262.9993



TO: Members of the Senate Committee on Public Benefits, Licensing and State-Federal Relations
FROM: American Heart Association American Stroke Association, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Hunger Task Force, Feeding Wisconsin, The School Nutrition Association of Wisconsin, Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, American Family Children's Hospital, UW Health, Healthy Kids Collaborative, REAP Food Group, Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards, Wisconsin Public Health Association, SSM Health, Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers, End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin
DATE: October 25, 2017
RE: Support for Senate Bill 416, the Healthy Eating Incentives FoodShare Pilot

Senator Harsdorf and Representative Rohrkaste have authored Senate Bill 416 and Assembly Bill 501, also known as the Healthy Eating Incentives FoodShare Pilot. We are writing today to express our support for this initiative. This pilot program will encourage and incentivize FoodShare recipients participating in the pilot to purchase more produce, which could have a positive impact on their diets and overall health.

Our organizations believe this legislation takes positive steps in helping to address hunger, food insecurity and the multiple health-related issues that stem from these. We all know the important impact that a healthy diet and lifestyle play in combating chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, and diabetes. It is therefore important to ensure that the healthy choice is the easy choice for Wisconsin citizens.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP – formerly Food Stamps) has been vital in addressing food insecurity and nutrition in the United States for more than 50 years. The program has an impact on health, educational attainment, and economic self-sufficiency.ⁱ Because of this, it is necessary to protect funding and access for the program, while at the same time addressing diet quality. In qualitative research by Leung et al., 82% of survey respondents supported providing additional benefits to SNAP participants that can be used to purchase only healthful foods.ⁱⁱ Your support of this pilot program would achieve this.

The proposed pilot program would also provide the opportunity to potentially assess the outcome of fruit and vegetable incentive purchasing to evaluate the effects on consumer purchasing, healthy food consumption, short-term health outcomes, and retailer implementation.

By creating a healthy eating incentive pilot program for FoodShare recipients in both urban and rural areas and studying this program, the state of Wisconsin is showing a commitment to fighting hunger while encouraging healthy diets and food purchasing habits.

We thank you for your time, look forward to engaging in this pilot program, and encourage you to support this legislation. If you have questions, please contact Ben Van Pelt with the American Heart Association at Ben.VanPelt@heart.org or 815-474-3973.

ⁱ Executive Office of the President of the United States. Long-term benefits of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. December 2015. Accessed online October 21, 2016 at https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/documents/SNAP_report_final_nonembargo.pdf/.

ⁱⁱ Leung CW, Ding EL, Catalano PJ, Villamor E, Rimm EB, Willett WC. Dietary intake and dietary quality of low-income adults in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 2012 Nov; 96(5):977-88.

October 25, 2017

Senate Committee on Public Benefits, Licensing and State-Federal Relations

Dear Chairman Kapenga and Members:

On behalf of the American Heart Association (AHA) and the Milwaukee Metro Board of Directors, we respectfully request your support of Senate Bill 416 and Assembly Bill 501, the Healthy Eating Incentives FoodShare Pilot. This pilot program, which is authored by Senator Sheila Harsdorf and Representative Mike Rohrkaste, will incentivize the purchase of produce for FoodShare participants and encourage healthier eating habits. This pilot also maintains the current structure and funding of the vital FoodShare program.

We all know the importance of a healthy diet and the impact it can have on reducing obesity and preventing chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease and stroke. However, there are places in the Milwaukee Metropolitan-area, as well as across the state, where access to healthy and affordable food is a challenge. In fact, in some communities throughout Wisconsin, residents do not have easy access to a full-service grocery store or supermarket and must rely on other outlets to purchase food. It is for this reason that our Board has prioritized strategies that improve access to healthy, affordable food.

Based on our work on this issue, it is clear that limited access relates to both geographic scarcity of stores and also limited economic resources to purchase food. Because of that, our organization and our Milwaukee Board of Directors is happy to offer our support for SB 416 and AB 501. This program not only provides additional benefits to FoodShare participants, but also targets those toward healthy food options. We believe this program will have an impact on people's health and the levels of food insecurity faced by Wisconsin residents. Additionally, we hope to remain engaged during the implementation of this program and the subsequent study on the impacts of this pilot.

Thank you for your time and for considering this request to support SB 416 and AB 501. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Ben Van Pelt at Ben.VanPelt@heart.org or 815-474-3973.

Sincerely,

Joe Haas, Chair, AHA Milwaukee Metro Board
VP Wealth Management
US Bank



**WISCONSIN
GROCERS
ASSOCIATION**

October 23, 2017

State Senator Sheila Harsdorf
State Representative Mike Rohrkaste
Wisconsin State Legislature

Delivered Via E-Mail

Dear Senator Harsdorf and Representative Rohrkaste:

On behalf of the members of the Wisconsin grocers association, I'd like to thank you for your work on behalf of AB 501 and SB 416 to develop a nutritional food pilot program under the FoodShare program.

While the WGA initially opposed this proposal, we have now registered in favor of these bills due to the efforts are you and your staff have made to educate our association on the benefits of the program and the basics of how the pilot would work including reimbursement for discounted products to retailers.

We sincerely appreciate your offer to communicate to the Department of Health Services with regard to having the Wisconsin Grocers Association work with the department from the beginning to help design and implement the program, as well as work with the department in assessing the overall success of the pilot program.

We look forward to continue working with you on this issue and others in any way we can contribute our knowledge and understanding of the grocery industry.

Thank you again!

Brandon Scholz
President & CEO

33 East Main Street, Suite 701 Madison, Wisconsin 53703 (608) 244-7150



**HEALTHY
SAVINGS**

**FoodShare
WISCONSIN**

**Senate Committee on Public Benefits, Licensing
and State-Federal Relations**

Testimony of Scott Nordstrand, General Counsel, Solutran, Inc.
October 25, 2017

Introduction

Good afternoon. My name is Scott Nordstrand. I am the General Counsel of Solutran, Inc., a company headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I live in Somerset, Wisconsin.

I want to thank the Senate Committee on Public Benefits, Licensing and State-Federal Relations for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 416 and the FoodShare healthy eating incentive pilot that it proposes. SB 416 was recently introduced by Senator Harsdorf and presently has 9 co-authors in the Senate and 17 co-sponsors in the Assembly. Its Assembly companion bill, AB 501, was introduced by Representative Rohrkaste and has similar support. Yesterday, it passed out of the Assembly Committee on Public Benefit Reform unanimously.

Today, I would like to introduce you to Solutran's Healthy Savings technology and how it could facilitate the FoodShare pilot program in SB 416.

Solutran Background

Solutran is in the business of processing financial transactions for public and private clients. Our core products include government EBT, WIC food instrument processing (20 years for the State of Wisconsin), electronic check processing for large retailers and our Healthy Savings technology.

Healthy Savings Technology

Our Healthy Savings program utilizes a bar-coded card and key fob, printed page or smart-phone display to provide participants with a means of receiving discounted pricing on healthy food products and fresh produce.

It provides real-time electronic discounts, a mobile app (with push notifications), website and weekly email reminders that effectively "trigger" better food choices.

We believe this technology can motivate FoodShare participants to eat healthier.

Pilot

Our vision for the 10-month pilot proposed by SB 416 will provide 2,000 FoodShare participants with access to 50% off fresh produce, up to \$10 per week, and 20% off other healthy branded foods.

The one-time, \$425,000 GPR request would provide funds for produce payments to retailers and a study of the pilot outcome.

If Solutran is selected by the Department of Health Services to conduct this pilot, we will cover all the administrative costs of the pilot, including card distribution, program management, electronic messaging, branded product discounts and financial reconciliation.

Why should we try this?

BadgerCare+

First, we are what we eat. In the long run, healthier eating means healthier people.

Wisconsin's current BadgerCare+ and Medicaid expense is approximately \$6 billion a year in State funds.

Many FoodShare recipients are also on State-funded BadgerCare+ and Medicaid, so improvements in their health will go directly to the State's bottom line.

Better Food Choices

Second, there is an understandable concern about unhealthy foods purchased with government funds. The question is: how do we convince folks to take home a bag of apples? We believe you need to make it a good deal. And every FoodShare dollar spent on produce is a dollar not spent on unhealthy food.

Branded Discounts

Third, our discounts on branded healthy foods offer needed savings to those with the least to spend. No SNAP program in the nation leverages free food manufacturer discounts to make these government funds go farther. And we do it electronically, right at the point of sale.

Wisconsin Food Manufacturers

Fourth, our focus on Wisconsin food manufacturers for branded discounts makes it a win-win. We will promote the purchase of Wisconsin grown and manufactured products to

FoodShare participants spending over \$1 billion in our grocery and convenience stores every year.

Building Upon Governor Walker's FoodShare Reforms

Fifth, we believe that this innovative, positive motivation for healthier eating builds upon Governor Walker's other FoodShare initiatives and efforts to increase workforce readiness. This program can help move people from government dependence to true independence by making them healthier.

Solutran Advantages

Finally, Healthy Savings is a proven program. 2.3 million Healthy Savings cards have already been issued in Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Illinois and Indiana. It will soon roll out in New York, New Jersey, Virginia and DC.

Large health insurers already provide it to their Wisconsin plan members. We have a strong and growing Wisconsin retailer network, including Pick 'n Save, Copps, Metro Markets, Woodman's and Marketplace Foods. More retailers are coming soon. Most recently, Kwik Trip is working to join and has endorsed this pilot.

Wisconsin Can Be First

This is the first program in the nation to offer a simple, effective way to encourage healthier eating by SNAP recipients. Being first means taking a chance on a new idea. In this case, that means making a one-time investment to test the concept in a pilot. We believe this can be the first step in transforming FoodShare and ensuring a healthier Wisconsin.

I would be glad to answer any questions that you may have.



HEALTHY SAVINGS®

FOODSHARE PILOT

AB 501/SB 416

WWW.MYHEALTHYSAVINGS.COM



SIMPLE, HEALTHY MOTIVATION

The 10-month pilot will provide 2,000 FoodShare participants with access to 50% off fresh produce, up to \$10 per week. Plus 20% off other healthy branded foods.



ONE-TIME FUNDING

The one-time, \$425,000 GPR request for the pilot provides funds only for the fresh produce payments to retailers and a third-party study of the pilot outcome.



SOLUTRAN COMMITMENT

Solutran, creator of Healthy Savings technology, will fund all other elements of the pilot, including card distribution, program management, electronic messaging, branded product discounts and financial reconciliation.

HEALTHY SAVINGS ADVANTAGES

Healthy Savings is the first program in the nation that allows SNAP recipients to receive discounts on fresh produce and healthy branded foods across retailer networks.

- Real-time electronic discounts, a mobile app, website and weekly email reminders that effectively “trigger” better food choices.
- Innovative, positive motivation for healthier eating supports Governor Walker’s FoodShare initiatives.
- No development costs—Healthy Savings is up and running in Wisconsin.
- 2.3 million Healthy Savings cards already issued in WI, MN, ND, IL and IN.
- Wisconsin retailers include Pick ‘n Save, Copps & Metro Markets, Woodman’s & Marketplace Foods. More retailers coming soon.

BEYOND A SUCCESSFUL PILOT

- ✓ Provide Healthy Savings benefits to all 700,000+ FoodShare participants.
- ✓ Long-term funding using portion of \$1 billion+ annual federal funding for FoodShare.
- ✓ Reduced BadgerCare+ (Medicaid) costs.
- ✓ Increased workforce readiness.
- ✓ Partnerships with Wisconsin food manufacturers for discounts on healthy foods promote Wisconsin products.
- ✓ Move people from government dependence to true independence using “the carrot, not the stick”.

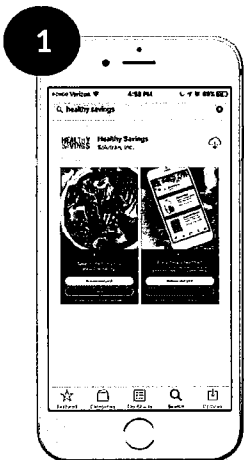
HEALTHY SAVINGS®

HEALTHY SAVINGS MOBILE APP GUIDE

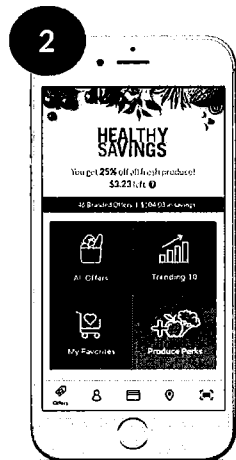


Start Saving Smarter

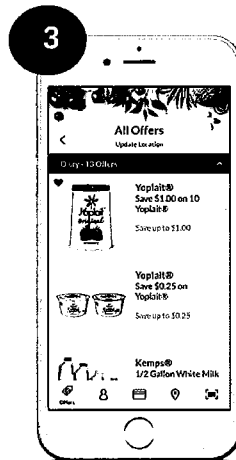
With intelligent list options and personalized messages, the Healthy Savings mobile app makes it even easier to save on healthier foods and find participating stores. Follow the instructions below and download the new Healthy Savings mobile app today in the App Store or Google Play.



1 Go to the App Store or Google Play, search for Healthy Savings and download the app



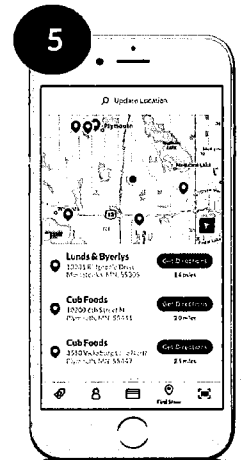
2 Launch the app, and select from four customizable lists



3 View product details by tapping on the offer. Swipe left or right to favorite or hide items



4 Tap "My Card" to access the mobile barcode that can be used at checkout



5 To search for available retailers, tap "Find Store"



Credit Operations

PHONE 608-793-6310

FAX 608-781-7517

EMAIL creditdept@kwiktrip.com

1626 Oak St., P.O. Box 1597

La Crosse, WI 54602

www.kwiktrip.com

Kwik Trip Supports Healthy Savings for FoodShare

REQUEST

Kwik Trip, Inc. (Kwik Trip) respectfully requests that funding for the Healthy Savings for FoodShare pilot be added to the 2017-19 biennial budget.

PILOT

Solutran, Inc. (Solutran) has developed and deployed a new technology called the Healthy Savings that encourages healthy eating choices among its participants in Wisconsin and other Midwestern states.

Solutran now proposes to bring this innovative program to Wisconsin FoodShare, initially in a pilot program to 2000 participants for 12 months. In this first-in-the-nation program, FoodShare participants will:

1. Purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at 50% off, up to \$10 per week in value; and
2. Receive discounts averaging 20% on a wide variety of other healthy foods, all funded by the food manufacturers themselves.

Solutran has offered to cover all the program costs for the pilot, except the actual reimbursement to retailers for the discounts on fresh produce and the cost of a third-party studying the outcome of the pilot. The budget request for these costs is \$500,000.

ROLLOUT

If the pilot demonstrates that Healthy Savings for FoodShare participants eat healthier, the benefits to the participants and the State of Wisconsin could include:

- Reduced BadgerCare+ (Medicaid) costs;
- Increased workforce readiness;
- Promotion of healthy foods from Wisconsin food manufacturers; and
- Partnerships with key Wisconsin food retailers.

OUR MISSION

To serve our customers and community more effectively than anyone else by treating our customers, co-workers and suppliers as we, personally, would like to be treated, and to make a difference in someone's life.

In a statewide rollout, Wisconsin would seek a waiver from the Food & Nutrition Service to use a small portion of the \$1 billion+ annual federal funding of FoodShare for a fresh produce matching fund. Wisconsin be the first state in the nation encourage healthy food choices by FoodShare participants and do so using existing federal funds.

KWIK TRIP SUPPORT

Kwik Trip is a recognized leader in the convenience store industry at encouraging healthy eating. Our extensive offerings in fresh produce, healthy branded products and healthy prepared foods are unrivaled. We believe that the combination of Kwik Trip's commitment to healthy foods and our broad geographic presence in Wisconsin makes us a natural partner with Healthy Savings for FoodShare. Kwik Trip is presently working with Solutran to determine the resources required and the timing for integrating this technology into our stores.

We believe this program could be a great benefit to FoodShare and the State of Wisconsin. If you have any questions, please give me a call.

Sincerely,



Steve Loehr

Vice President of Support Operations

608-793-6286



Woodman's Food Market - 2631 Liberty Ln, Janesville, WI, 53545

April 28th, 2017

Greetings,

Woodman's Markets supports the Healthy Savings program and is currently implementing the Healthy Savings technology across all of our stores.

Healthy eating and making healthier foods more affordable to the communities we serve is important to us. We support the proposed funding for the Wisconsin FoodShare Healthy Savings pilot. The idea of providing Foodshare participants of 50% off produce up to \$10.00 per week and additional discounts on healthy foods is a wonderful opportunity to promote healthy eating among FoodShare participants.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clint Woodman", is written over the printed name. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Clint Woodman



TO: Members of the Senate Committee on Public Benefits, Licensing and State-Federal Relations
 FROM: American Heart Association American Stroke Association, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Hunger Task Force, Feeding Wisconsin, The School Nutrition Association of Wisconsin, Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, American Family Children's Hospital, UW Health, Healthy Kids Collaborative, REAP Food Group, Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards, Wisconsin Public Health Association, SSM Health, Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers, End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin
 DATE: October 25, 2017
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Our organizations believe this legislation takes positive steps in helping to address hunger, food insecurity and the multiple health-related issues that stem from these. We all know the important impact that a healthy diet and lifestyle play in combating chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, and diabetes. It is therefore important to ensure that the healthy choice is the easy choice for Wisconsin citizens.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP – formerly Food Stamps) has been vital in addressing food insecurity and nutrition in the United States for more than 50 years. The program has an impact on health, educational attainment, and economic self-sufficiency.ⁱ Because of this, it is necessary to protect funding and access for the program, while at the same time addressing diet quality. In qualitative research by Leung et al., 82% of survey respondents supported providing additional benefits to SNAP participants that can be used to purchase only healthful foods.ⁱⁱ Your support of this pilot program would achieve this.

The proposed pilot program would also provide the opportunity to potentially assess the outcome of fruit and vegetable incentive purchasing to evaluate the effects on consumer purchasing, healthy food consumption, short-term health outcomes, and retailer implementation.

By creating a healthy eating incentive pilot program for FoodShare recipients in both urban and rural areas and studying this program, the state of Wisconsin is showing a commitment to fighting hunger while encouraging healthy diets and food purchasing habits.

We thank you for your time, look forward to engaging in this pilot program, and encourage you to support this legislation. If you have questions, please contact Ben Van Pelt with the American Heart Association at Ben.VanPelt@heart.org or 815-474-3973.

ⁱ Executive Office of the President of the United States. Long-term benefits of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. December 2015. Accessed online October 21, 2016 at https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/documents/SNAP_report_final_nonembargo.pdf/.

ⁱⁱ Leung CW, Ding EL, Catalano PJ, Villamor E, Rimm EB, Willett WC. Dietary intake and dietary quality of low-income adults in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 2012 Nov; 96(5):977-88.



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Madison, WI 53718
p: 608-478-2882
f: 608-478-2005
www.FeedingWI.org

October 24, 2017

Chair Chris Kapenga and The Hon. Committee Members
Senate Committee on Public Benefits, Licensing, and State-Federal Relations
Attn: Timothy Duffy, Committee Clerk
State Capitol
PO Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707

Re: SB 416

Dear Chair Kapenga and Committee Members:

We are writing to share our position on SB 416, which will be heard in committee on October 25, 2017. SB 416 would create a 10-month pilot incentive program for 2,000 participants in the FoodShare program that would help them make healthier food purchasing choices. Feeding Wisconsin supports this positive, incentive based approach to improving the FoodShare program and aligns with one of our four principles to guide FoodShare reform – focus on nutrition through benefit adequacy.

Feeding Wisconsin is the state's association of the six regional Feeding America food banks. Together, through our food banks and their network of over 1,000 local food programs in every county of our state, we provided over 50 million meals to nearly 600,000 of our friends and neighbors in 2016. Our mission is to help our food banks, partners and stakeholders fight hunger, improve health, and strengthen communities.

FoodShare is the Wisconsin name for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps), a federal nutrition assistance program that provides individuals and families living with low and no incomes with a modest monthly benefit (about \$110 per month, per person) to buy food at supermarkets, farmers markets, convenience stores, and megastores that sell groceries. These benefits are delivered on an EBT card and are strictly monitored by the states that locally administer the program, the federal government that funds the program, and the banks that facilitate benefit delivery.

Proper nutrition is key to good health and as hunger and food insecurity are essentially malnutrition problems due to the inability of people with low-incomes to access enough adequate, nutritious food, the idea at the core of SB 416 – how to positively help people with low-incomes eat more healthfully – should be lauded and promoted.

Eating healthfully is a complex issue, one that involves having access to resources like time, skills, personal habits and preferences, and not the least of which – money. On a per calorie basis, healthy food can often cost more than less healthy, more calorically dense food items. For many people, this is the key reason why eating healthfully on FoodShare is a challenge.

By implementing an incentive for healthy food purchases, as SB 416 aims to do, the state would not only increase the FoodShare benefit, addressing the core cost issue, but it would also target the increase at healthy items in supermarkets. This is an approach that has been proven to increase the consumption and spending on healthy food.

The Healthy Incentives Pilot (HIP) was a pilot program authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill and provided incentives for SNAP participants to make healthy food purchases in Massachusetts from 2011 to 2012.



The results were extremely encouraging. The study found that HIP participants consumed 26% more fresh fruits and vegetables and spent 11% more on these same products when compared to regular SNAP participants. The study and the final evaluation report can be found here: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/healthy-incentives-pilot-final-evaluation-report>

This pilot program is also similar to the extremely popular “Double Up” programs found at Farmers markets in Wisconsin and throughout the nation. Using privately funded dollars, these programs double FoodShare recipients’ benefits up to \$5 or \$10 for their purchases at the Farmers markets. The great innovation in SB 416 is that it brings the ability to use these boosted benefits into the supermarket where the vast majority of FoodShare recipients shop.

Numerous national studies conducted by the USDA have shown that FoodShare recipients’ food purchasing and consumption patterns are just like non-FoodShare recipients. Everyone makes sub-optimal food choices from time to time, not just the people on FoodShare. It’s just that people who have low-incomes have less flexibility to avoid making poor food choices due to cost.

With limited resources to address the issue of healthy eating, the state should strategically invest public dollars to fund the healthy incentive pilot as proposed by SB 416. This type of positive intervention would incentivize healthy eating, address hunger, boost local economies, and begin to tackle the key issue that prevents people on FoodShare from eating more healthfully – cost.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration of our position on SB 416. Please do not hesitate to contact me at dalee@feedingwi.org or 608-960-4511 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dalee", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Lee
Executive Director
Feeding Wisconsin



Survival Coalition

of Wisconsin Disability Organizations

P.O. Box 7222, Madison, Wisconsin 53707

DATE: October 25, 2017

TO: Senate Committee on Public Benefits, Licensing and State-Federal Relations
FR: The Survival Coalition of Wisconsin Disability Organizations

RE: Support for Senate Bill 416, FoodShare healthy eating incentive pilot program.

Dear Chairperson Kapenga and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on Senate Bill 416.

The Survival Coalition of Wisconsin Disability Organizations is comprised of over 30 statewide groups representing people with all disabilities and all ages, their family members, advocates and providers of disability services. We would like to voice our support for Senate Bill 416, which provides discounts on healthy foods for individuals using FoodShare, and ask that you consider an amendment to this bill that would add an educational component to the pilot program.

FoodShare is an important program for people with disabilities. According to the Department of Health Services, 25% of FoodShare recipients are either elderly, blind, or have a disability; and 46% of households receiving FoodShare benefits contain at least one individual that is, either elderly, blind, or has a disability.¹

The "Healthiest Wisconsin 2020" report prepared by the Department of Health Services found that in Wisconsin adults with a disability are more likely to be overweight or obese than adults without a disability.² This report found that 74% of Wisconsin adults with a disability were overweight or obese while 61% of adults without a disability were overweight or obese. However, it is important to note that individuals with disabilities are more likely to be overweight or obese for a variety of reasons, including: a lack of healthy food choices; difficulty chewing or swallowing; the use of medications that contribute to weight gain; physical limitations that make it difficult to exercise; a lack of accessible environments and several other factors.

In addition, a higher percentage of people with disabilities are of lower income and, therefore, more often live in "food deserts." A "food desert" is an area with little or no access to large grocery stores that offer fresh, healthy and affordable foods. Instead of such stores, these urban

¹ Wisconsin Department of Health Services, "FoodShare Wisconsin At-A-Glance." Accessed at: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/foodshare/fsataglance.htm>

² Wisconsin Department of Health Services, "Healthiest Wisconsin 2020 Baseline and Health Disparities Report." Accessed at: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/hw2020/baseline.htm>

and rural areas often contain only fast food restaurants and convenience stores. Physical access to large grocery stores can be difficult for people with disabilities of low incomes, particularly if the stores are distant, the store is not on a bus line, or if the consumer has no vehicle. Carrying fresh food from grocers can also be a challenge for individuals who must take public transit, walk long distances, or have other physical limitations.

While there are many barriers that make it difficult for people with disabilities to access healthy foods and achieve good health, we believe that Senate Bill 416 has the potential to reduce some of the financial barriers to purchasing healthy foods for people using FoodShare. We hope the Legislature will continue to address the other barriers to nutrition in Wisconsin and look for ways to promote physical activity in our communities. Along these lines, we hope you will consider adopting an amendment to Senate Bill 416 that would add an educational component to this bill.

One of our member organizations, the Arc Wisconsin, has had success with a nutrition education and healthy eating program aimed at people with intellectual disabilities. Their HealthMatters curriculum focuses on healthy eating, portion control and physical activity. Of the 542 participants, 181 decreased their BMI and 145 decreased their blood pressure.

An educational component to this legislation would help connect FoodShare participants with local grocery stores and farmers' markets, provide participants with healthy recipes and provide training on cooking skills.

We ask that you support Senate Bill 416 and adopt an amendment to add an educational component to this bill.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

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