



SUMMIT UPDATE
NUTRITION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
JUNE 20, 2005

This year saw a marked increase in the number of nutrition and physical activity bills, with Summit advocates playing a key role!

California Center for Public Health Advocacy (CCPHA)

Amanda Purcell, Policy Director of the California Center for Public Health Advocacy (CCPHA), reports that CCPHA's work has focused on two priorities: **SB 965** and **SB 12**. On May 30, both bills, authored by **Senator Martha Escutia**, passed out of the Senate.

Taking on the fight against obesity, **Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has stepped in as the lead sponsor of SB 965, known as the Soda Ban bill**. CCPHA posts an SB 965 fact sheet, list of supporters and sample letter of support on the [legislation page](#) of their website (<http://www.publichealthadvocacy.org/>). The bill will be heard next in the Assembly Education Committee on **June 29th**.

SB 965 would expand the definition of beverages that can be sold in elementary and middle schools to high schools. Permitted drinks would include fruit- and vegetable-based drinks with no added sweetener and at least 50% fruit or vegetable juice; drinking water without sweeteners; milk products; and electrolyte replacement beverages containing no more than 42 grams of added sweetener per 20-ounce serving.

CCPHA is the sponsor of SB 12 on nutrition standards, which is also sponsored by the Governor and by the California School Boards Association.

An SB 12 fact sheet, list of supporters and sample letter of support are posted on the CCPHA [legislation page](#). SB 12 will be heard next in the Assembly Education Committee on **June 29th**.

SB 12 would implement and expand the food standards originally defined by the landmark SB 19, [The Pupil Nutrition, Health and Achievement Act of 2001](#), also sponsored by CCPHA and authored by Senator Escutia.

With some specified exceptions, food sold on California school campuses outside of the federal meal program, could have no more than 35% of calories from total fat, 10% from saturated fat, and 35% sugar by weight. Items sold in vending machines could not exceed 200 calories. All groups selling food on campuses would be required to meet the standards, with the exception of fundraising efforts that occur one-half hour or later after the end of school or off-site.

CCPHA posts a [comprehensive list](#) of nutrition and PA bills on their website, an accessible and quick read to understand the breadth of nutrition issues being addressed in the state Legislature.

California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA)

At the Summit, **Ken Hecht**, President of the **California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA)** outlined three priorities for the organization's legislation:

- Strengthen nutrition at schools to prevent childhood obesity;
- Maximize the infusion of federal funds into California by removing barriers to participation in the nutrition programs; and
- Improve customer service to maximize participation in the nutrition programs.

These priorities are moving forward through two major legislative bills sponsored by CFPA – AB 1385 and AB 696.

AB 1385 (Laird), The Food for Schoolchildren Act of 2005, would cut the paperwork and red tape involved in signing up students for free school lunch and breakfast. The state would be required to create a statewide computer system to identify children who live in households that receive food stamps. These students would then be automatically certified as eligible to receive free school meals, with no additional paperwork requirements. An estimated 53,000 additional children would now participate in the federal free school breakfast and lunch programs, which could bring in approximately \$20 million more federal dollars.

The bill has passed the Assembly and will be heard next in the Senate Education Committee on **June 22**. See the CFPA website for [AB 1385 updates](#) and a [sample letter](#) of support

AB 696 (Chu), The Food for Families Act of 2005, would increase food stamp participation and bring more federal funds through five changes to the program:

- end expensive finger imaging requirements for welfare and food stamp eligibility;
- make Medi-Cal recipients eligible for food stamps;
- change the reporting requirement for welfare and food stamps to semi-annually, not quarterly;
- terminate the 3-month time limit on food stamps for childless adults; and
- require increased outreach and education by the Department of Social Services to increase food stamp participation.

The bill has successfully passed out of the Assembly and is now in the Senate. See the CFPA website for [AB 696 updates](#) and a sample letter of support. The next hearing will be held **June 28th**.

Budget Update!

Two of the five changes proposed in AB 696 may occur in the budget bill rather than in AB 696.

1) The end to the 3-month Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) time limit in areas of high-unemployment was approved in both the Senate and Assembly Budget so it appears that it will end up in the final budget (whenever) it heads to the Governor.

2) The Assembly voted to end finger imaging for food stamps and cash aid applicants. The Senate did not. The Legislative Analysts office (LAO) offered this compromise: End finger imaging in food stamp only cases and keep it in place for Cash aid programs (CalWORKS, General Assistance). The compromise also proposed ending the photo requirement outright. The budget conference committee voted to *accept* this compromise, which means that the current budget proposal would end to finger imaging for food stamps. Whether this proposal stays in the budget remains to be seen.

CFPA has also endorsed or opposed more than 20 bills related to food and nutrition, including strong support for the comprehensive approach undertaken through SB 12 (see above). See [Recommended Positions on Non-CFPA Legislation](#), which includes sample letters of support or opposition.

American Heart Association

Jamie Morgan from the **American Heart Association (AHA)**, Western States Affiliate, has moved forward with measures to improve the quality of physical and nutrition education.

AHA is sponsoring AB 689 and actively supporting two others bills (SB 559 and SB 567). AHA is also co-sponsoring SB 12 (see above). Call Jamie Morgan at 916-446-6505 for fact sheets and sample letters of support.

AB 689 (Nava) would require the State Board of Education to adopt health education content standards based on recommendations from the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The bill has passed the Assembly, and will be heard next in the Senate Education Committee on **June 29th**.

AHA is supporting two bills authored by **Senator Torlakson**.

SB 559 would, through various provisions, reduce, the ability of schools to excuse high school students from physical education courses. The bill would also expand physical fitness testing to grade 3.

The bill has passed the Senate and will be heard next in the Assembly Education Committee on **June 29th**.

SB 567 would bring the state into conformity with federal law by requiring school districts participating in federal school meal programs to implement a school wellness policy by the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year. Over and above federal law, this bill would also require that the school wellness policy include beverages and that school nurses and health and physical education teachers be included as the policies are developed.

This bill has passed the Senate and will be heard next in the Assembly Education Committee on **June 22nd**.

California WIC Association

Diane Woloshin and colleagues from the **California WIC Association (CWA)** have worked on a number of fronts to follow through on their three Summit goals.

Goal: Protect and support breastfeeding for the first six months among low-income women.
Coalition – The California Breastfeeding Coalition (CBC) was formed this year, a broad coalition including 34 active coalitions from 37 California counties and currently chaired by Dr. Jane Heinig from the U.C.D. Human Lactation Center.

Award – CBC is partnering with the Senate Task Force on Youth and Workforce Wellness (and Taskforce Chair, Senator Torlakson) to recognize businesses and organizations that support breastfeeding. The “Mother Baby Friendly Workplace Award Awards” will be announced on **August 24**.

Breastfeeding Hospital Model Policies – The Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health (MCAH) division at the Department of Health Services was worked with CWA, the Statewide Breastfeeding Advisory Committee, the CBC, and the Inland Empire Breastfeeding Coalition to develop Breastfeeding Hospital Model Policies. Policies will be distributed in the next few months to hospitals with a letter of explanation, supplementary information, and information on the hospital and county breastfeeding rates. (For more information, see <http://www.mch.dhs.ca.gov/programs/bfp/default.htm>)

Breastfeeding Rates – CWA will be publishing a report on the hospital and county breastfeeding rates and practices for use by legislators, funders, interested organizations and the public.

Medi-Cal Regulations – A workgroup comprised of CWA, the Statewide Breastfeeding Advisory Committee, and Maternal Child Access has been convened to assess current Medi-Cal regulations and determine what changes need to be made to simplify reimbursement of breastpumps and lactation services. These services are infrequently used as providers have difficulty processing and receiving reimbursement.

Goal: Preserve and improve federal nutrition programs serving very young children.

CWA has advocated at the national level for adequate appropriations in all domestic discretionary and mandatory safety net programs including healthcare, nutrition, child care assistance, and housing.

CWA has also supported current state streamlining legislation for safety net programs including: food stamps, school meals, CHDP, Healthy Families, and Medi-Cal; AB 696 (Chu), AB 1385 (Laird), SB 437 (Escutia), AB 772 (Chan), AB 624(Montanez), and AB 1298 (Evans).

Goal: Create a "zone of health" around every young child in California:

CWA has commissioned Samuels and Associates to conduct a review of the clinical literature, relevant demographic and public health data, and existing pre-school nutrition and obesity prevention strategies and interventions in order to paint a clearer picture of the geography, etiology, and consequences of obesity and related nutrition problems in California's youngest families, and to inform the dissemination of best practices in the field and policy recommendations.

CWA convened an advisory panel of early childhood and nutrition experts including researchers, educators, program administrators, community advocates, and others to begin the planning process for an Early Childhood Obesity Prevention Forum to review findings, set priorities and establish strategy for coordinated approaches.

Key Budget Items

Summit advocates have also monitored budget items related to nutrition and physical activity. Highlights include:

- No major cuts were proposed to nutrition or food stamp programs in the Governor's original budget in January, or his May Revise budget. However, both of these budgets included cuts to other programs serving the poor, including CalWORKs.
- The Governor's May Revise included \$18.2 million for a Fruits and Vegetables for School Breakfast Pilot Project. Advocates hope the Governor will continue to support this proposal during the Big 5 negotiations.
- In his January budget, the Governor proposed a \$6 million [California Obesity Initiative](#), which is still under consideration in the final budget negotiations.

The **California Task Force on Youth and Workplace Wellness** has evaluated over 30 nutrition and physical activity bills, [posted](#) on the web (in partnership with CCPHA).

In addition, the Task Force:

- * hosted in May a variety of high profile promotional events relating to **California Fitness Month**;
- * Announced the winners of the **Superintendents' Challenge**, intended to promote healthy school sites; and
- * Will announce the winners of the **Fit Business Award** in **July 2005**.

See <http://www.wellnesstaskforce.org/> for more information.