

Forty Years of Advocacy for the CACFP Community

ROUND ROCK, TX, UNITED STATES, July 10, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- For 40 years, the National CACFP Association (NCA) has served as a voice for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Since its founding in 1986, advocacy has been central to the association's mission: ensuring that policymakers understand the importance of CACFP and that the professionals who operate the program have the support they need to succeed.



The National CACFP Association Celebrates 40 Years of Advocacy

From a small group of advocates working to strengthen the program to a nationwide network of providers, sponsors, partners and policymakers, NCA's advocacy has always focused on ensuring children and adults in care settings have access to nutritious meals.

-Building a Strong Voice for the CACFP-

Advocacy begins with awareness; you can't win support for a program people don't know about. NCA works daily to educate policymakers, community leaders and the public about the critical role CACFP plays in combating food insecurity and supporting healthy development.

One of NCA's most visible advocacy efforts is National CACFP Week, an annual campaign designed to raise awareness of the program and the providers who make it possible. Each year, advocates across the country work with elected officials to secure proclamations and congressional recognition, highlighting how the CACFP supports communities and improves nutrition for children and adults in care.

These efforts help ensure CACFP remains part of the national conversation about child nutrition and early care.

-Advancing Policies That Strengthen CACFP-

Policy advocacy is another key part of NCA's work. Over the years, they have supported federal legislation that improves program access, strengthens reimbursement and reduces barriers for providers.

NCA's advocacy also includes engagement with federal agencies such as the USDA. Through regulatory rulemaking processes, they provide feedback and recommendations to help ensure CACFP policies work effectively for the providers, sponsors and State agencies who administer the program.

They have also played an active role in conversations surrounding Child Nutrition Reauthorization. NCA has provided testimony during congressional hearings and continues to advocate for improvements that strengthen the CACFP and support the communities it serves.

Right now, two bills before Congress would do exactly that. The Early Childhood Nutrition Improvement Act aims to modernize CACFP policy and reduce administrative burden for providers. The Child Care Nutrition Enhancement Act would strengthen participation and support the child care programs that rely on it.

NCA has endorsed both and continues making the case to policymakers for what they mean for children, families and providers nationwide.

-Elevating the Voices of CACFP Providers-

No one makes the case for CACFP better than the people who work in it. A provider describing what a nutritious breakfast means for the children in her care will reach a lawmaker in a way no policy brief can.

Through tools like our advocacy campaigns, [Action Center](#) and educational resources, NCA empowers providers and sponsors to share their stories with policymakers. Providers can advocate by contacting their elected officials, hosting site visits, or sharing how CACFP supports the children and adults in their care.

These real-world stories help policymakers understand how policy decisions affect communities and why strengthening CACFP matters.

-Working Together Across States-

Advocacy is also about collaboration. NCA regularly convenes partners across the country to share knowledge, identify challenges and develop solutions that strengthen the program.

One example is NCA's quarterly meetings with State agencies, where leaders come together to discuss emerging issues, share best practices and coordinate efforts that support CACFP

implementation nationwide. These conversations help ensure that the program continues to evolve to meet the needs of providers and participants.

-Expanding Awareness and Opportunity-

Advocacy also means expanding people's understanding of CACFP and connecting the program to broader nutrition efforts.

Recent initiatives, such as Farm to CACFP, highlight the benefits of connecting child and adult care programs with local food systems while strengthening nutrition education and community partnerships.

By elevating these initiatives, NCA continues to demonstrate how CACFP supports healthy communities far beyond the meal service itself.

-Looking Ahead to the Next 40 Years-

As NCA celebrates its 40th anniversary, the association recognizes that advocacy is not a one-time effort. It is an ongoing commitment to strengthening CACFP and supporting the providers, sponsors and state leaders who make the program work.

The future of CACFP depends on strong partnerships, informed policymakers and engaged advocates across the country. Together, NCA will continue working to expand access, improve policies and ensure that every child and adult in care has access to nutritious meals.

Because when we advocate for CACFP, we advocate for healthier communities.

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