

2018 ADVOCACY SCORECARD

● Objective Accomplished ● Progress Made ● No Progress Made

EDUCATION

Future Ready Iowa Act (HF 2458) ●

UWCI served on the Future Ready Iowa Alliance and helped develop recommendations that informed this bill. Highlights include establishing a last-dollar scholarship for Iowans seeking post-secondary education and a public-private Innovation Fund to support wraparound services and expanded work-based learning.

INCOME

Automatic Driver's License Revocations for Non-Driving Drug Offenders (SJR 2007, HF 2502) ●

UWCI, the OpportUNITY Re-Entry Taskforce, and coalition partners successfully advocated for the opt-out of the federal requirement to automatically revoke the driver's licenses of non-driving drug offenders through SJR 2007. This two-part process required the House and Senate pass a joint resolution and the Governor to certify the decision to opt-out of the federal law without loss of federal funding. The second step was repealing automatic revocation as a criminal offense from Iowa code. The enabling language was adopted through the Standings Appropriations process.

Child Care Assistance "Cliff Effect" (SF 2418) ●

UWCI, the Child and Family Policy Center, and a coalition of organizations advocated for the expansion of the state's Child Care Assistance program. As part of the Health and Human Services appropriations process, a two-pronged proposal was presented: 1) increase the child care provider reimbursement rate for infants and toddlers and 2) expand the program's income eligibility limits.

Child Care Assistance "Reimbursement Rates" (SF 2418) ●

The Legislature agreed to increase the provider rate for infants and toddlers to the 75th percentile of 2014 market rate for Quality Rating System (QRS) participating providers. Quality initiative funding will be used to increase this provider rate. An additional \$3 million was appropriated to address low reimbursement rates for participating QRS providers at or below 50 percent of market rate. With increases in provider rates, Child Care Assistance participating providers could make additional child care slots available statewide, helping to alleviate child care deserts. The entire provider rate increase will cost \$8.6 million.

Adult Education Funding (SF 2415) ●

UWCI focus areas in adult education were funded at status quo levels: Pathways for Academic Career and Employment Fund: \$5,000,000, GAP Tuition Assistance: \$2,000,000, Adult Education and Literacy Programs: \$5,500,000

SNAP Employment & Training Workgroup (SF 2418) ●

Establish a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) interim workgroup to explore better state engagement focused on increasing the skills of SNAP participants and drawing additional federal funding. An expanded SNAP E&T program will help low-income Iowans access more education and training offerings.

HEALTH

Suicide Prevention and Mitigation of Toxic Stress Response (SF 2113) ●

UWCI and the Iowa Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs 360) Coalition advocated for including annual adverse childhood experiences and toxic stress response training for all school employees. This policy will help advance a trauma-informed care approach to identify at-risk students and connect them with the resources they need.

Childhood Obesity Prevention Funding (SF 2418) ●

Funding for childhood obesity prevention was increased by \$300,000 from FY18 levels to \$494,993. These funds are housed in the Iowa Department of Public Health and help support the 5-2-1-0 initiative of United Way of Central Iowa and the Iowa Healthiest State Initiative.

Physical Education Data Collection (HF 2243) ●

To better understand the driving factors of childhood obesity and wellness, UWCI advocated for data collection on physical education programs and infrastructure offered in Iowa schools. This bill was passed by a House subcommittee, but did not advance.

ESSENTIAL NEEDS

Food Bank and Pantry Sales Tax Exemption (SF 2385, HF 2459) ●

UWCI, the OpportUNITY Food Insecurity work group, and other hunger organizations advocated to exempt Iowa's food banks and pantries from state sales tax requirements. While bills were introduced in both the Senate and House, this policy did not advance this session.

Drug Testing and Work Requirements for Public Assistance Recipients (SF 2370, HF 2428) ●

UWCI, United Ways of Iowa, and coalition partners advocated against drug testing and work requirements as a condition to receive public assistance (SF 2370, HF 2428). Bills introduced during the first funnel week did not advance to the floor of either chamber for consideration this session. Nearly 55 percent of SNAP recipients are working with an additional 42 percent of SNAP households including a disabled or elderly member. Studies show that work requirements do not help those experiencing poverty secure self-sufficient employment, and instead, create barriers to their success. Drug testing as a condition to enroll has been tried in several states and proved to be unconstitutional and costly. These measures did not advance this session.