



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 4, 2015

CONTACTS:

Sara Lonardo (DeLauro) 202-225-3661

Jeff Sánchez (Sánchez) 202-225-6676

## **DeLauro, Sánchez Introduce Legislation to Stop Five-Year Olds from Falling Into the Nutrition Gap**

WASHINGTON, DC—Congresswomen Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) and Linda Sánchez (D-CA) today introduced the [\*Wise Investment in our Children \(WIC\) Act\*](#). The bill would increase the age limit for children participating in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) for one additional year, from five to six.

“WIC currently provides nutrition services for children only up to a child’s fifth birthday, when it is assumed that they will enroll in kindergarten and be eligible for school meals,” **DeLauro** said. “However many children do not enter school until well after their fifth birthday. By expanding WIC to age six we close that gap and ensure children have a strong health and nutrition foundation. No child should be placed at a nutritional disadvantage simply because of when their birthdate falls.”

“By extending the age limit of children participating in WIC by one year, we ensure they receive the nutritional services needed until they’re actually eligible for school meals,” said **Sánchez**. “This is common sense legislation, and further improves an already effective program. In my state of California alone, 84 WIC agencies provide services to over 1.45 million participants each month at over 650 sites. I know this success is shared across the country. By passing this bill, we close a critical gap in support, and make certain that our families can continue to rely on the services they need.”

The legislation is supported by the National WIC Association.

“The nutrition gap between WIC and school shouldn’t put America’s children at nutrition, health, or learning risks because of their birth dates and local rules. Continuing WIC nutrition services for children up to age six assures that all children are protected by WIC’s essential nutrition safety net until they enter school. The *Wise Investment in our Children Act* does just that,” said Rev. **Douglas A. Greenaway**, President & CEO of the National WIC Association.

Dr. **Evelyn F. Crayton**, RDN, LDN, FAND, a registered dietitian nutritionist and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' 2015-2016 President said: "The WIC program recently celebrated 40 years of success in providing healthy beginnings to millions of children and families. Investing in mother and their children's health and nutrition is critical to a strong future for our country. Allowing children to stay with the WIC program up to the age of six will ensure they are ready to learn when they enroll in kindergarten."

Dr. **Diana Becker Cutts**, MD, pediatrician at Hennepin County Medical Center and Principal Investigator with Children's HealthWatch, said: "WIC hits a research-based, cost-effective, proven homerun for my youngest patients. At first base, it begins with enhancing prenatal nutrition before birth, at second base it increases access to healthy nutrition for infants and kids, at third base is WIC's on-going nutrition education and guidance for parents. Ensuring that young children receive these essential supports until age 6 without a gap, as the *Wise Investment in our Children Act* would do, would help bring kids into home base with the healthy start in life they need and deserve."

###

The bill was introduced with 23 co-sponsors:

DeLauro, Rosa  
Sánchez, Linda T.  
Rangel, Charles B.  
Pocan, Mark  
McGovern, Jim  
Lee, Barbara  
Gutiérrez, Luis V.  
Schakowsky, Jan  
Clark, Katherine M.  
Torres, Norma J.  
Moore, Gwen

Serrano, José E.  
Lewis, John  
Dingell, Debbie  
Conyers, John, Jr.  
Fudge, Marcia  
Napolitano, Grace  
Schiff, Adam  
Hahn, Janice  
Cicilline, David  
Farr, Sam  
Payne, Jr., Donald M.  
Pingree, Chellie