

Iowa Community Action Network

Legislative Agenda – 2025

FaDSS

- One increase in 8 years but costs continue to rise and expanded eligibility since the last increase, this program now has a waitlist. Status Quo budget = a cut to funding. Additional monies will allow this program to increase program capacity and keep the workforce at competitive wages
 - To Serve 469 families that are currently waiting for services and do cost of living increases for providers – **ASK: \$2,778,074**
 - Have altered program service delivery to be more responsive to families needs. Previously information and referral – now much more skill development intensive.

EARLY EDUCATION & CHILDCARE

- Include Head Start and Early Head Start in discussions about statewide preschool to take advantage of federal dollars and braided funding to ensure better outcomes for children and families.
- Move CCA for providers from pilot into law
- Increase the CCA entrance income limit from 165% FPL to 250% FPL with 5% increase increments each year and reduce the number of work hours required for CCA from 32 to 28 hours
- Pay CCA based on enrollment rather than attendance.
- Establish funding to support recommendations in the 2023 Iowa Child Care Workforce Study that brings parity to pay for early childhood educators and public school teachers with the same level of education
- Sustain and expand funding for child care solution funds, including locally driven public-private partnerships

EVICITION EXPUNGEMENT

- The Community Action Network supports legislation that allows for evictions to be expunged from an individual's record after 7 years. (The same time period for a bankruptcy filing to remain on someone's record)
- 51% of eviction filings are dismissed and don't go to court due to tenant/landlord resolution and errors in filings, yet the eviction still remains on public record forever.
- 21,902 Iowans were evicted in 2023. The first half of 2024 is trending even higher.
- *Proposed Language:*
 - *Court will expunge records no later than three days from the date of the hearing (or the date the hearing would have been held) if any of the following occur:*
 - *Defendant found not guilty, case is dismissed, plaintiff does not appear*
 - *Upon application of a defendant found guilty, court shall seal records after 7 years from the date found guilty (if not found guilty in an eviction hearing again since that time & has paid all related court costs/fees/fines/etc.)*

FOOD INSECURITY

- Ensure Iowa's annual participation in the Summer EBT (SUN Bucks) program
- Make improvements to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
 - Raise income eligibility for SNAP to 200% of the federal poverty level
 - Reduce barriers in the application and recertification process through state options, such as repealing the asset test and participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP)
 - Provide state investment in the Double Up Food Bucks (DUFEB) program to incentivize the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables by SNAP participants
 - Ensure benefit adequacy through a state-funded \$50 minimum benefit
- Provide Healthy School Meals for All in Iowa
 - Increase access to free, high-quality school meals for K-12 students in Iowa
 - Support investment in school kitchen infrastructure and staff upskilling
- Build on the success of the Choose Iowa Food Purchasing Pilot Project
 - Increase local purchasing matching funds to food banks and schools, and expand efforts to include food pantries, early child care centers, senior centers, and other emergency feeding organizations

TAXES

- Pass no additional tax cuts that will make our tax system more unfair and force radical service cuts

Use one-time dollars in the Taxpayer Relief Fund *not* for permanent tax cuts, but for sensible one-time tax initiatives that offer broad benefit to Iowans:

- **Pilot a state Child Tax Credit** — similar to the federal CTC that was temporarily expanded in 2021 and boosted opportunities for hardworking families, reduced child poverty and strengthened local economies. One-time dollars can help families pay for essentials like food, utilities and diapers as we study the credit's long-term impacts on families and the economy.
- **Temporarily double the Earned Income Tax Credit** to from 15% to 30% of the federal EITC to support low-wage working families who can't make ends meet on earnings alone. The well-documented benefits of the EITC include reducing poverty and improving health.