

Response to *New York Times* editorial, “Rethinking Help for Children,” February 29, 2008:

For many years, the funding of WIC has not kept pace with the increasing needs of the population.

When WIC began in 1974, there were only 88,000 participants. WIC now provides nutritional supplements for eight million people every day, clearly demonstrating an ongoing need.

Of great importance is the increasing emphasis WIC now places on breastfeeding. In 2004, 74% of newborn infants were breastfed, but only 67% of infants in WIC did so. Through the “Loving Support Campaign” these statistics are changing. This alone will provide documented health benefits for infants and economic benefits for families and WIC.

Recognizing these significant benefits, the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine applauds WIC for its commitment, and the NYT for bringing attention to the work and budgetary needs of this important agency. The Academy urges Congress to allocate greater support for WIC initiatives in order to improve the nutritional health and well-being of American families.

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