

MEMORANDUM

February 6, 1984

TO: Senator Dole
FROM: Christina Bolton
RE: Controversial WIC Program Funding Issues in
President's Budget

Last fall, Congress made it clear that its WIC policy for FY 1984 was to fund the program at the level necessary to maintain the year-end FY 1983 caseload -- 3 million persons. In the Continuing Resolution, Congress appropriated \$1.06 billion for the WIC Program through July 10, 1984, expecting to provide a supplemental appropriation at a later date to fund the program for the remainder of the fiscal year (annual funding rate of \$1.36 billion). The Conference Report to the CR stated:

"The Conference agreement provides \$1.060 for the period October 1, 1983, through July 10, 1984 and assumes a fiscal year 1984 appropriation level of \$1.360, which should be sufficient to maintain the fiscal year 1983 year-end caseload.

. . . Any action. . . to spread the \$1.060 appropriated herein beyond July 10, thereby reducing participation, would be in direct violation of the intent of the conferees."

Reagan Budget Implications:

In its new FY 1985 budget, the Reagan Administration failed to request the \$300 million needed to carry WIC through the end of the fiscal year. Instead, the Administration requested a supplemental appropriation of only \$167 million, an insufficient amount.

- The USDA budget states that under the level of funding the Administration has proposed, the WIC program would serve 2.8 million persons in FY 1984. The 2.8 million participation figures is an average monthly participation figure for the 12 months of FY 1984. We are already into the fifth month, and participation has been maintained at 3 million persons.
 - if the current WIC caseload of 3 million persons is maintained (as the law requires) until the \$1.06 billion runs out in early July, average participation would have to be brought down to about 2.73 million .

FY 1985:

For FY 1985, the Administration has proposed a WIC funding level of \$1.254 billion, which is \$217 million below the \$1.471 billion figure estimated by CBO to be needed to maintain the WIC Program at its current level of service.