

break bread

Illinois Community Action Association
Food Security & Advocacy News

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2004

U.S. House Passes Child Nutrition Reauthorization Bill

Source: <http://www.frac.org>

March 24, 2004: This evening, the House of Representatives approved, by an overwhelming bipartisan majority (419-5) its child nutrition reauthorization bill, The Child Nutrition Improvement and Integrity Act (HR 3873). This bill, which was reported out of the Education and Workforce Committee by a 42-0 vote on March 10, will expand the availability of nutritious meals to more children in school, in outside school hours programs, and in child care.



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The Bush Administration Says it Will Contest World Health Organization Plan to Fight Obesity

Source: Washington Post, January 16, 2004

A World Health Organization (WHO) plan, which outlines strategies that nations can use to fight obesity, has been praised by public health advocates but is being contested by the Bush Administration. The administration contends that the plan is based on faulty scientific evidence and exceeds the U.N. body's mandate. Critics claim that the administration's objections are simply an attempt to please the food and sugar industries and go against Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson's position on the obesity problem. The most controversial details of the plan include restrictions on advertising aimed at children and increasing the prices of certain non-nutritious foods through taxes and adjustments in farm subsidies. "[The WHO plan] essentially establishes a new standard with which all doctors and public health interests can now challenge the governments and say, 'What are you doing about this?'" said Philip James, vice president of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences.

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Public Policy Spotlight

Nutrition Outreach & Public Education Act

Source: www.legis.state.il.us

The Illinois Nutrition Outreach and Public Education Act became effective January 1, 2004. This enacted legislation establishes a nutrition outreach and public education program within the Department of Human Services to enroll targeted populations in federal food and nutrition assistance programs and to promote the fuller implementation and utilization of such programs in unserved or underserved areas. The legislation also authorizes grants to community-based organizations for outreach activities. The performance of activities required by the Nutrition Outreach and Public Education Act is contingent on the appropriation of funds by the General Assembly for the purpose of nutrition outreach and public education.

States Can Consider Private Contractors to Sign Up Food Stamp Recipients, USDA Says

Source: Seattle Post-Intelligencer, March 24, 2004

Undersecretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services Eric Bost said at a House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture hearing that the U.S. Department of Agriculture would consider letting states use private contractors to sign eligible people up for the Food Stamp Program, even though federal law says government workers should do the job. Undersecretary Bost noted that if a state had a better way to provide services and save money, then it should be considered. In Florida, a pilot program will allow non-government workers to handle applications for food stamps, as well as Medicaid and TANF benefits.

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CNR continued

The bill makes vital improvements in the nutrition programs, such as expanding successful paperwork reduction pilots in the Summer Food Program that have already resulted in more low-income children receiving nutritious meals during the summer months; extending eligibility for snacks and meals to children in homeless and domestic violence shelters up to the age of 18; making it possible for more low-income children from military families to receive free and reduced price school meals; allowing for-profit child care centers that serve significant numbers of low-income children to participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; providing migrant children with automatic eligibility for free school meals; creating new ways to improve the nutrition environment in schools; and making the application process for school meals easier for many low-income families.

According to FRAC, the bill will provide greater access to important child nutrition programs for many low-income children. This will translate into more hungry children becoming better nourished and ready to learn. FRAC urges the Senate to follow suit as soon as possible with similar positive action on the child nutrition programs, including additional improvements, in order to ensure that our nation's low-income children and their families can benefit from the constructive and hard-won provisions in this child nutrition bill.

Watchdogs Push for RFID Laws

Source: <http://www.wired.com/news/privacy/0,1848,62922,00.html>

CHICAGO — RFID is too powerful a technology and Wal-Mart and its suppliers are too cozy with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for the companies to be trusted with the data gathered from radio tags on consumer goods, says a civil rights lawyer and a privacy law expert. But the companies, led by Procter & Gamble, want consumers to allow them to keep RFID tags active after checkout, and to match shoppers' personal information with particular items.

The civil rights lawyer, Barry Steinhardt, director of the Technology and Liberty Program at the American Civil Liberties Union, spoke at the RFID Journal Live conference in Chicago last week. He said companies could use RFID tags to profile their own customers and share their information with the government — violating the companies' own privacy policies.

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The privacy threat comes when RFID tags remain active once you leave a store.

Illinois Sportsmen vs. Hunger

Source: <http://dnr.state.il.us/legislation/isah/default.htm>

With the start of the firearm deer season, the Illinois Sportsmen vs. Hunger program is offering a flat payment of \$35 to assist with the processing cost of whole deer donations only. This deer season, hunters are encouraged to donate their entire deer harvest or portions of the meat to food banks and charities. Participating meat processors will grind the venison into two-pound packages of burger.

Donations are being accepted to assist with the cost of the processing. Make checks payable to the Illinois Conservation Foundation, Jess Hansen, Executive Director, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271. Note "Illinois Sportsmen Against Hunger" in the memo section of the check.

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Source: www.northernilfoodbank.org

- ***One in twelve people in Illinois is "Food-Insecure".***
- ***96,000,000,000 pounds of food are thrown away each year by the Food Service Industry.***
- ***One in nine people in Illinois live in poverty.***

An Illinois Race to End Hunger

Source: <http://www.dannonduathlon.com/naperville.html>

The DANNON Race to End Hunger is scheduled to occur on September 19, 2004, in Naperville, Illinois. Proceeds from the event will be distributed to anti-hunger organizations in Illinois that work to reduce and eliminate the



presence of hunger. There will also be a DANNON Danimals Kid's Duathlon which is a shorter version of the DANNON Duathlon. The kid's Duathlon consists of a 1/2 mile run and it will begin immediately after the DANNON Duathlon is completed. Awards will be given in the following age groups: 8-9, 10-11, and 12-13. Registration is \$20, and goes up to \$25 for late registration, and a one day USAT membership (\$3) is necessary if the athlete is not a USAT member. Registration is available online for this event if you choose at www.dannonduathlon.com/naperville.html.

Food Companies Put Their Servings on a Diet

Source: Retailing Reporter, March 13, 2004 p.B1

Food companies are starting to slim down their portions as they feed demand for convenience and moderation in consumers' diets, a sign that the age of supersized Slurpees, soft drinks and fries may be on the wane. From downsized packages of coffee cake to mini-cans of Pepsi and diminutive Kit Kats and energy bars, food firms are marching to a different drum beat these days.

In the battle against the bulge, food firms aren't just tossing out carbohydrates, calories and trans-fatty acids in their offerings. Now they're also turning to reduced portions to help people enjoy those indulgences on a smaller scale. McDonald's nationwide created supersize waves when it announced it will drop its Super Size fries and soft drinks from its menu by the end of the year.

The push for healthier choices is partly fuelled by the knowledge that consumers have sued McDonald's Corp., Kraft Foods Inc. and other conglomerates, accusing them of promoting bad eating habits that are leading to soaring obesity rates and related ailments, industry watchers say. As well, aging baby boomers are paying more attention to their widening waist lines and overall well-being — and marketers are chasing the potential windfall.

Are You Cutting Back on Carbs?

Source: www.informedeating.org, January 23, 2004

With two-thirds of the nation's population now overweight (according to the U.S. surgeon general), millions of Americans are desperate to try anything to shed excess pounds. The latest trend in weight-loss mania is high-protein, low-carbohydrate dieting. A recent survey found as many as 48 percent of Americans are cutting back on carbs or plan to go on a low-carb diet in the next year.



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Recovery Period Job Growth Falls Far Short of President Bush's Projections

Source: Economic Policy Institute, January 2004

President Bush projected that the tax cuts he proposed and Congress passed would help generate more than 1.8 million jobs between July and December 2003 — about 1.3 million jobs assuming normal 3 percent job growth projected by the Council of Economic Advisers, and 510,000 jobs generated directly by the tax cuts, or an average of 306,000 jobs per month. In fact, only 1,000 jobs were created in December 2003. In the six month period ending in December 2003, a total of 221,000 jobs were created. And despite substantial growth in GDP, workers' average wages were flat or falling slightly (after factoring in inflation) for the final quarter of 2003.



Filmmaker Bites off Mouthful: Month of McDonald's Meals

Source: Desert Morning News, March 3, 2004

- One in four Americans visits a fast-food restaurant every day.
- Sixty percent of all U.S. citizens are either overweight or obese.
- Americans spent \$110 billion on fast food in 2003.

For a month last year, Morgan Spurlock's eating ritual was what he called "every 8-year-old's dream." The filmmaker got to go to McDonald's for all of his meals, three squares a day, for 30 straight days — and he didn't have

to plead with his parents or swear he'd clean his room later. He also brought a camera crew along for every single bite, bellyache and, well, barfing moment and created "SUPER SIZE ME: A Film of Epic Portions". Warning: The witty filmmakers rated the movie "F" for "fat audiences," which includes most of America. Audiences should know that "some food may not be suitable for young children".

Spurlock hopes the film and his eating experiment will serve as a wake-up call for Americans who — as he, nutritionists, doctors, even a former Surgeon General he consulted with believe — are eating themselves to death. "If there's one thing we could accomplish with the film, is that we make people think about what they put in their mouth," Spurlock said.

After bingeing on everything Ronald's menu has to offer at least once — and supersizing when offered — the previously trim and healthy Spurlock had spent about \$850, gained 24 pounds, raised his once-normal cholesterol levels by 65 points, sent his blood-fat levels out of the Playland roof and, in one of his doctor's words, turned his liver into pate.

see "F" on page 11

Survey Finds That Majority of Americans Fear Personal Poverty

Source: U.S. Newswire, January 12, 2004

An annual survey commissioned by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development found that 56 percent of American adults are concerned they will be poor at some point in their life, 5 percent more than last year. The "Poverty Pulse" survey is taken annually to determine public views on poverty. The survey also found that 96 percent of Americans think that it is important to address poverty now, but respondents far underestimate the real number of people experiencing poverty in America (they said 1-2 million poor people; the actual number is 34.6 million).

There's a New Way to Save the World: Grocery Shopping

Source: Wall Street Journal, February 17, 2004

In the next couple of weeks, pineapples, mangos and grapes bearing "Fair Trade Certified" stickers will start hitting scores of supermarkets nationwide, part of a broader movement to make shoppers feel good about themselves and the food they are buying. The labels mean that workers in poor countries received higher-than-usual wages and other benefits. Along with other new buzzwords such as "certified sustainable" and "responsibly traded," Fair Trade Certified food products are being embraced with surprising speed by some of the nation's biggest food marketers — and not just the alternative natural food stores. Last fall, Dunkin' Donuts rolled out Fair Trade Certified coffee; Starbucks sells it, too.

Amnesty International USA, the human-rights group, for example, has long sold in its catalogs only products it feels are "fairly traded" and not produced in countries it feels are unfair to workers, like China.

see GROCERY on page 11

Food Freedom Day

Source: Waterloo Region, Feb 7, 2004

Food Freedom Day marks the date the average Canadian has earned enough money to pay for his or her grocery bill for the year, said Jeff Stager of North Dumfries Township. In 2002, the average Canadian earning \$28,558 spent \$3,001 on food and non-alcoholic beverages. That's 10.5 per cent of their annual earnings.

That's one of the lowest percentages in the world. In some European countries, people



pay upwards of 25 per cent of their annual income for food, Stager said. In Mexico, it's 23.9 per cent. In Japan it's 14.7.

Haiti: Violence Feeds

Hunger in Countryside

Source: Jane Regan, <http://www.globalinfo.org/eng/reader.asp?ArticleId=28098>

ST. MARC, Feb. 14 — Conflict interrupts local food production and distribution and thus is the most basic obstacle to food security. In Haiti, a population already food insecure from years of poverty, faces an even more acute threat of hunger as the World Food Programme's relief efforts were hampered in recent months by violence. Emergency relief efforts coordinated by the UN are supplying food relief, inputs for food production and international forces are hoping to secure deliveries. Some



3.8 million people are hungry every day in Haiti, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) feeds 268,000 people in northern Haiti — many of them kids in school lunch programs. But the continued violence means stocks cannot be replenished.

India: Findings on Cola Companies Expose Need for Food Standards

Source: Inter Press Service, February 6, 2004

The affirmation by an Indian parliamentary committee of the findings by an environmental group underscores the need for independent food standards in the country. The report found that beverage giants Coca-Cola and Pepsi Cola have unacceptably high levels of commonly used pesticides in their colas. These pesticides have apparently contaminated groundwater sources because India has yet to formulate a comprehensive policy on pesticides used extensively in agriculture and vector control.

The committee also endorsed the long-held demand of consumer groups that India establishes an independent food safety and standards authority to ensure the availability of safe and wholesome food for the public. This is significant because more than 1,600 citizens are reported to die everyday because of water-borne diseases and soon there could be provisions to take authorities to court if safe

see INDIA on page 11

Sugar Surprise

Source: Broadcast Mar 9, 2004. <http://www.cbc.ca/consumers/market/files/food/sugar/index.html>

In a recent report released by the World Health Organization entitled “Diet Nutrition and the Prevention of Chronic Diseases,” (TRS916) leading health experts are making new recommendations for governments on diet and physical activity to combat rising chronic health conditions such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and various cancers. One of the most controversial recommendations urges people to limit their daily consumption of free sugars to less than 10 per cent of total energy intake.

Today, a wide variety of sugars with different names are used in the food preparation process. Statistics Canada suggests that we eat about 23 teaspoons of added sugars everyday. Those 23 teaspoons don’t include all the other added sugars we get from corn sweeteners - the main ingredient in pop. And, they don’t include the sugars in fruit juices.

No one is telling us to worry about the natural sugars in fruit. After all, our bodies and our brains, would not function without some sugar. The WHO’s 10 percent free sugar recommendation adds up to approximately 12 teaspoons of a



Students Offered Discounts on Healthy Eating Choices

Source: The Ottawa Citizen, Tuesday, January 13, 2004

VICTORIA — Students at 60 Vancouver Island schools will soon be getting rewards for choosing healthy foods from vending machines. They will be offered price discounts on items such as fruit juice or granola bars while paying more for chocolate bars, soft drinks and similar foods. The program is being launched by Ryan Vending, which has more than 1,900 snack and beverage machines in schools across Vancouver Island.

Under the program, the price of bottled water in schools has been reduced from \$1.75 to \$1.25 and the price of fruit juice from \$1.50 to \$1. Meanwhile, the price of soft drinks has jumped from \$1 to \$1.25. Granola and fruit bars are now \$1 while chocolate bars have climbed to \$1.25.

Last week the Canadian soft drink industry decided to pull all its carbonated beverages from elementary and middle schools across the country by the beginning of next school year.

sugar a day based on an average 2000-calorie diet - so much less than we eat now that the report provoked loud criticism from the sugar industry and the American government.

For example, what typically goes well with a hot dog? A dash of ketchup? Careful - a third of ketchup is sugar. Perhaps a bun? Buns typically have another half-teaspoon of sugar so the yeast can work its magic. How about a health snack? Granola bars have two teaspoons of sugar a piece. Cutting down on our sugar intake may be more difficult than we think.

Creative.....

Community Kitchen Turns Food Waste Into Energy

Source: www.frac.org



BIOGAS is coming to Harlem. A new anaerobic digester at the Community Food Resource Center (CFRC) Harlem kitchen in New York City will process 500 pounds of food waste daily and turn it into electricity, saving the non-profit organization an estimated \$250 a month in energy costs. The CFRC serves 750 meals per night, five days a week at its Harlem soup kitchen and food pantry site.

“We are delighted to work with CFRC to help them become an even more efficient, sustainable, and self-sufficient organization,” said Kari Ostrem of Earth Pledge, an environmental group that is collaborating on the waste-to-fuel project. “Just satisfying hunger pains is not enough,” commented CFRC program director Hiram Bonner, who also oversees a culinary training program for unemployed and underemployed residents at the facility.

CFRC uses produce from local farms as well as donated food to prepare meals. Installation of the anaerobic digester will “close the loop” on food production and preparation at CFRC, enabling table scraps and food waste to become a source of renewable energy.

Farms-to-Jails Idea Yields Market for Locally Grown Crops

Source: By Jane Hodges, jhodges@seattletimes.com; Times Snohomish County Bureau

Tristan Klesick helped run a farmers market near a Seattle area County Jail last year. He began to wonder whether an individual farmer like himself could sell produce to the jail. After months of negotiation, Klesick and another farmer will participate in a pilot program to do just that. In June, they’ll work with Aramark, the county jail’s food-services contractor, and Sound Produce, the distributor that delivers produce to Aramark, to provide nearly 2,700 pounds of locally grown cabbage to four Western Washington jails each week.

The farms-to-jails deal is the latest example of entrepreneurship among regional farmers, many of whom are working to create alternative sources of revenue. Supermarket consolidation has eroded the amount of locally grown produce stores buy, and the number of farms and amount of farm acreage has steadily declined.

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Ideas

Got soyMilk?

Source: Organic Food Network, OFN2@aol.com

Robert Cohen, author of *Not Milk* and www.notmilk.com, examined all the soy milk makers on the market, and then worked with a manufacturer to design and produce his own machine combining the best features of all the models he’d seen and making a few improvements of his own. The result is Soy Toy, a machine that makes fresh soy and nut milks, soups, veggie burgers and more. To see this machine, visit www.soytoy.com. It comes with a recipe book; however, you can also sign up for a Yahoo Group to exchange recipes. You’ll also learn a lot about soy on this website.

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JAILS continued

To counter this market trend, farmers have shifted their emphasis in recent years to selling directly to consumers at farm stands and farmers markets, and through home-delivery programs. Some farmers also rely on revenue from “agritourism” — seasonal activities such as corn mazes and hayrides.

Under the pilot program, Aramark will buy produce from distributor Sound Produce with the understanding that Sound Produce will source it from the local farms. Aramark will buy all of its cabbage from Snohomish County and serve it to the 2,700 to 3,000 inmates at jails in four Washington counties. If the program works with cabbage, Aramark may add celery, lettuce and onions. Produce from local farms could cost 5 to 10 percent more, but Aramark plans to absorb the extra cost.



CARBS continued

Now, some of the heaviest hitters in the food industry are standing up and taking notice. That’s because there are big bucks to be made by cashing in on a trend that’s gone way beyond the diet-fad stage. The Nutrition Business Journal estimates that sales of low-carb foods totaled \$1.4 billion in 2003 and could eventually reach \$3 billion.

The processed food industry is churning out low-carb products by the truckload, introducing more than 600 new items last year alone. Apparently, no product is too absurd to go low carb. Everything from pasta to ketchup to ice cream is being reformulated and re-introduced. Even beer companies are fighting over whose light brew contains fewer carbs.

But beyond the low-carb hype, consumers are being sold nothing more than illusory marketed snake oil. Many nutrition and health experts agree that high-protein diets are not only dubious as a long-term approach to weight loss, but also potentially dangerous. That’s why no major health-care organization has embraced high-protein diets, and why they’ve been publicly denounced by both

the American Dietetic Association and the American Heart Association.

To maintain their competitive edge, food makers must continually come up with new products and marketing gimmicks. The “low-carb revolution” represents an opportunity similar to the low-fat diet craze of the 1980s and 1990s, in which other kinds of highly processed foods were touted as “the answer” to our expanding waistlines. Then, years later, we learned that eating SnackWells didn’t result in weight loss after all. How long will it take before we realize that eating low-carb cookies won’t either? The Harvard School of Public Health Nutrition Source sensibly tells us that many foods rich in whole-grain carbohydrates are good sources of essential vitamins and minerals and recommends that “whenever possible, replace highly processed grains, cereals, and sugars with minimally processed whole-grain products.” In other words, eat brown rice and other whole grains in their natural state. But that’s not the message the processed food industry wants you to hear, because that won’t sell any highly priced, “value-added” products.

U P coming Events
 Hunger Awareness Day – June 3rd
 Source: <http://www.hungerday.org/content/index.php>

On June 3rd, communities across the country will unite to focus attention on the persistent problem of domestic hunger. For the third consecutive year, food banks and food-rescue organizations, soup kitchens and food pantries, countless individuals, faith-based organizations and businesses will donate time, raise funds, and give food to help their neighbors. Please visit www.hungerday.org and use one of the toolkits provided on the site to get your organization, your company, your family, and your friends involved!

Community Building through
 Community Gardening
 August 27-28 in Cincinnati, Ohio

Learn proven strategies community organizers use to develop dynamic leaders and create strong communities through a participatory approach to community building. This two-day workshop will cover:

- Community Organizing
- Leadership Development
- Grassroots Fundraising Basics
- Communications Planning
- Coalition Building

For more information please contact Justin Russell at (316) 264-9303 x.113 or Betsy Johnson, ACGA, at (617) 236-5200 or betsy@bgjohnson.com



RFID continued

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security, meanwhile, is working with companies like Wal-Mart and Procter & Gamble to develop RFID (which stands for radio-frequency identification) to monitor America’s consumer supply chains. Homeland Security may find the combination of live tags and customer profiles hard to resist when investigating suspected terrorists, or as a means to monitor entire groups of people, said the privacy expert.

RFID will make it easy for companies and government investigators to establish the whereabouts of citizens, by reading the active tags on their clothing and other items in private and public places. Investigators in divorce cases and criminal investigations already regularly subpoena E-Z Pass automatic toll records, which come from RFID readers, to figure out where an individual’s car was at a particular time.

“Privacy is cheap,” said Peter Glaser, senior manager of client workshops at Accenture Technology Labs, which is developing a smart medicine cabinet and a smart closet, which use RFID readers to encourage people to take their medicine and help them coordinate their wardrobes. “Companies just need to tell consumers what’s in it for them.”

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“F” continued

On the bright side, at least he had enough film footage to put together a hilariously entertaining and educationally eye-opening documentary that sinks its teeth into the nation’s obesity epidemic. It’s been a, well, supersize hit at the Sundance Festival. Theaters showing the movie have been about as crowded as McDonald’s lobbies at lunchtime on Big Mac Monday.

GROCERY continued

Morally pure marketing like this is also partly an outgrowth of the growing clamor about free trade and the effects of globalization on third-world workers.

The growth of the grass-roots movement, combined with the success of the Fair Trade movement in Europe — where the market for Fair Trade Certified products is three times larger in dollar sales than it is in the U.S. — is now persuading mainstream companies to get on board.

INDIA continued

water is not made available by Civic authorities.

The committee also noted that the cola companies are lacing their beverages with large doses of caffeine, which is known to be addictive, without mentioning it on the labels. The cola companies cannot plead ignorance of the effects of caffeine since they are already required to restrict its use in carbonated drinks in countries like Australia, China and Canada.

Because existing law places no restrictions on the extraction of groundwater, cola companies have been found, in several instances, to have taken to mining for water to meet their requirements. Coca-Cola emphasizes “using natural resources responsibly”. Yet a wholly owned subsidiary in India is accused of depleting village wells in an area where water is notoriously scarce.

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break bread is a quarterly publication completed by Illinois Community Action Association using funds provided through the Community Food and Nutrition Program by the Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity.

If someone you know has an interest in food assistance programs or nutrition advocacy, we would be happy to add them to our mailing list.

The **break bread** staff would like to thank the USDA’s midwest region, food and nutrition service for the inspiration for this newsletter. Their newsletter, *insight...out*, focuses on nutrition news and can be obtained by contacting kathleen.fiorito@fns.usda.gov.

ICAA's Mission Statement

The Illinois Community Action Association is a membership organization which serves as the network for Illinois' not-for-profit corporations and units of government which strive to raise the health, education and economic standards of the low income population in every county within the State of Illinois. The Illinois Community Action Association serves the collective interests of its members by: advocating public policies, promoting the value of the Association, providing information on issues relevant to the membership, and building partnerships that advance the community action network.

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