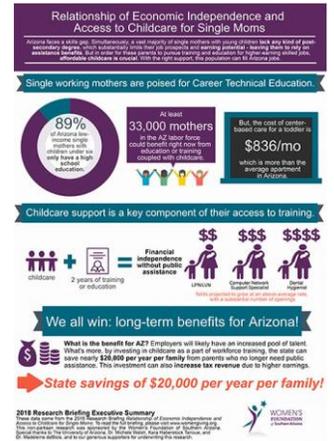




Women’s Foundation of Southern Arizona 2018 Summary: Advocacy on Issues Affecting Women and Girls

Building on our state-level advocacy and public policy strategy launched in 2016, WFSA continued to shine a spotlight on issues affecting women and girls at the State Capitol in 2018 by:

- Hosting our Inaugural WFSA Advocacy Day on February 7, 2018—WFSA trained and brought 25 advocates from Southern Arizona, traveling by bus, to meet with nearly 50 legislators
- Releasing new research, in collaboration with the University of Arizona, as a resource for lawmakers, making the case for redefining childcare as a key component of workforce development, illustrating how this policy approach can help address Arizona’s labor shortage by creating good employees and good parents. www.womengiving.org/research
- Awarding several public policy grants, which funded organizations that provide both direct service and work to influence policy change.
- Educating stakeholders through our **W.I.N.-AZ** (Women’s Issues Network - Arizona). W.I.N.-AZ is a free advocacy resource for individuals and organizations, providing timely legislative updates, reports and action alerts with a focus on what’s happening at the Arizona State Capitol. Our W.I.N.-AZ mailing list now numbers 5,000 subscribers. Join for free at www.womengiving.org/action



In late 2017, in recognition of our public policy work in Arizona, WFSA received a highly competitive \$150,000 national award from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to increase the economic security of families through two-generation systems change. Over the next three years, WFSA and its fellow awardees in three other states will work collaboratively with local and national experts and partners to develop scalable, research-driven, sustainable two-generation approaches to systems that link early child education and care to employment for low-income families.

Policy W.I.N.s and Setbacks in 2018 in Arizona

The 2018 Legislative Session will always be remembered for the #RedforEd movement and the fight for funding for adequate teacher pay and public schools. The \$10.4 billion budget included nearly \$273 million for a 9% increase in teacher pay and \$100 million that starts to restore education funding for schools for computers, books and repairs, though districts will determine how the funds are allocated. Governor Ducey outlined a plan for a 20% teacher pay increase by 2020, without raising taxes. Many education advocates have expressed distrust about the plan. The budget also includes \$2 million for the arts, \$1 million for food banks, \$13 million for programs for the developmentally disabled, about \$1 million more than last year, \$7 million to pay the state’s share of new veterans’ homes in Flagstaff and Yuma and \$4 million for rural fire departments to help in fire prevention.

WFSA monitored nearly one hundred bills this year and took a position on 6. Of the 5 we supported, 3 were passed and signed into law. Legislative action that we opposed passed, worsening women’s reproductive health access.

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Big WINS on Bills We Supported:

- **HB2324 – Creates voluntary workforce certification and training guidelines for community health workers, who are on the frontlines of public health, especially in rural areas and tribal communities.** Signed by the Governor on May 16, 2018.
- **HB2449 – Increases access to high-quality childcare and preschool for more low-income children in Arizona.** Signed by the Governor on April 10, 2018.
- **SB1245 – Doubles the value of SNAP benefits at farmers' markets and allocates \$400,000 for pilot programming to improve access to fresh food for SNAP recipients.** Signed by the Governor on April 12, 2018.

There is Still Work to Do:

This session, we also faced some setbacks.

- Two bills that we supported stalled during the 2018 Session. **HB2217 – this bill would have exempted diapers, feminine hygiene products and infant formula from the luxury tax.** Though it passed the House Ways & Means Committee and was assigned to the House Health Committee, the bill did not advance to the House Floor. This issue had bi-partisan support this year, which was a WIN for women and children. Multiple versions of the same **bill to strengthen the Children's Health Insurance Program (Kids' Care in Arizona)** were introduced and advanced through committee hearings but stalled. With coalition partners, we will have another bite at the apple next year on both issues.
- Tax conformity (the proposed above-the-line charitable deduction) that WFSA supported as part of a coalition was not part of the final budget package but could be revisited next year.
- Legislative actions that we opposed that passed, worsening women's reproductive health access, included a **budget maneuver to limit referral options given at public health offices to pregnant women** and SB1394 which **amended existing reporting requirements for abortions, demanding additional arduous and, in some cases, duplicative documentation from both patients and medical providers.** This bill was signed into law by the Governor on May 16, 2018.
- The approved state budget, negotiated behind closed doors, excluded an appropriation of nearly \$60 million in additional CCDBG federal funding for childcare subsidies. Though disappointed, WFSA will be a resource to legislators and administration officials in the coming months, working with our coalition partners we will work to educate legislators on the opportunity to appropriate these critical funds next session.

Research-Driven Opportunities for 2019:

- Several concrete action items were secured as a direct result of our 2018 Advocacy Day, including a commitment from a key legislator, based on our research report, to sponsor a bill in 2019 to change eligibility for childcare subsidies, redefining education hours toward a career as eligible hours toward the work requirement for low-income parents.

Advocacy and systems-change work is long-term. We thank our Board, staff, volunteers and generous supporters for taking the long view as we work, incrementally, to create change that empower women and girls.