State Budget Appropriation Secured for North Carolina's 2-1-1!

Thank you! Your personal visits, phone calls, emails, texts, and letters were instrumental in securing the $250,000 appropriation in the state budget and your partnership is applauded!

United Way of North Carolina and 2-1-1 are now one organization combining efforts to resource and support your work as you serve families in your local community. State partnerships, along with specific United Way initiatives, are driving call volume up, increasing confidence in the statewide system, and expanding the United Way brand.

Planning is already underway for next year's long session with strategies developed to secure recurring funding for NC 2-1-1.

The 2018 session of the North Carolina General Assembly ended on June 29 but not before lawmakers approved a number of constitutional amendments.

Six separate constitutional amendments will be on the ballot for voter consideration in November. A brief summary is provided:

- Reduce the maximum allowable state income tax rate from the current highest possible limit of 10% to 7%. The House made changes to the Senate's version of S.75 yet unintended consequences could still impact nonprofits. If voters approve this amendment in November, the state's ability to create revenue and/or to invest in important services like healthcare and education could be limited and cause them to lean on nonprofits who are already challenged in addressing unmet needs in our state.
While the United Way community opposed the income tax cap proposal, earlier proposals had suggested a cap of 5.5% which would have severely limited future legislature's ability to generate funding for disaster response and other pressing needs. North Carolina's current income tax rate of 5.5% is scheduled to be reduced to 5.25% next year - reducing tax revenues by an estimated $575 million.

- **Require voters to use photo identification for in-person voting.** No details are yet available on what types of photo ID will be acceptable or how the voter ID process will work. The Voter ID requirements could make it harder for seniors, people with disabilities, and individuals from low-income families who don't have a driver's license or other photo ID to vote in elections.

- **Change the membership of the NC Board of Ethics and Elections.** This amendment will replace the nine-person Board with an eight-person board appointed by legislative leaders from the two main political parties. This amendment will also give the state legislature the power to make all of appointments to state boards and commissions, removing the Governor's involvement. This amendment could impact nonprofits since the State Board regulates nonprofits' lobbying activities and nonpartisan voter registration work with state boards and commissions which could experience leadership and priority change.

- **Create a constitutional right to hunt, fish and harvest wildlife.**

- **Establish certain basic rights for victims of crimes.** This amendment would strengthen protections for victims of crime; to establish certain absolute basic rights for victims; and to ensure the enforcement of these rights.

- **Change the appointment process for filling vacant judicial seats,** including giving the General Assembly a role in this process. This amendment implements a nonpartisan merit-based system that relies on professional qualifications instead of political influence when nominating Justices and judges to be selected to fill vacancies that occur between judicial elections.

If voters choose to pass the amendments, lawmakers are likely to come back to Raleigh in late November to develop laws implementing each constitutional amendment.

Thank you to all local United Ways that contacted their lawmakers - and the legislators that took action on the income tax cap - these voices made an important difference in the income tax cap debate.

Federal Government - House passes Farm Bill and SNAP could be impacted...

**SNAP is a vital program helping local communities in North Carolina win the fight against hunger. As Congress debates the future of SNAP in the Farm Bill, your engagement is valuable.**

United Ways across the country are raising awareness about how SNAP is helping local children, families, veterans, seniors, people with disabilities and those seeking work. We want to make sure that the final version of the Farm Bill includes the Senate's bipartisan SNAP provisions. [View differences between the House and Senate Farm bill.](https://ui.constantcontact.com/visualeditor/visual_editor_preview.jsp?agent.uid=1130958273356&format=html&print=true)
Last week, the House Agricultural Committee passed their version of the 2018 Farm Bill which includes cuts to SNAP and other food assistance.

You can take action! Grassroots and grassroots ideas are offered as you consider your approach to sharing information about the food insecure children and families that your United Way serves. Visit UWW's Advocacy Toolkit for story examples, talking points, and other information to support your action.

According to Feeding America, more than 479,000 children are food insecure right here in North Carolina. SNAP provides temporary support to working families in times of hardship, so they can feed their families while getting back on their feet.

- One in six children in the United States - approximately 13 million - don't know where their next meal is coming from. That's enough students to fill 180,555 school buses.
- In North Carolina, 1,565,910 people go hungry on a regular basis.
- We must advocate for efficient programs like SNAP that temporarily help North Carolinians take care of their families, including children and seniors, during tough times.

SNAP reflects United Way's mission of improving the health, education and financial stability of our communities.

- SNAP helps people afford nutritious food so they can stay healthy, which makes it easier to get and keep a job and take care of their families.
- Children with regular access to nutritious food perform better in school and have higher graduation rates. They also have a decreased risk of health and behavior problems.
- Pregnant mothers who have access to nutritious, affordable food have healthier babies.
- Older Americans who receive SNAP benefits can better afford their prescription medications on fixed budgets.

Charity alone cannot feed all the hungry families in America.

- SNAP is a $65 billion program; United Way raises $3.6 billion each year across the United States.
- A 5 percent cut in SNAP would be equivalent to eliminating United Way's entire footprint across America.

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