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-  Policy
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UNITED WAY
Central Iowa



ADVOCACY AGENDA 2025



UNITED to THRIVE

The five elements of a thriving community are interconnected areas of focus United Way of Central Iowa uses to create strategies and set goals to improve the lives of every person in our community.



EARLY CHILDHOOD SUCCESS



Lead efforts to build innovative programs and investment to address childcare workforce shortages and support quality, affordable childcare for all.

Solutions include:

- Flexibility in the state's Child Care Assistance weekly work/education requirement
- State income tax exemptions for childcare providers
- Extend pilot programs to allow providers access to the state's Childcare Assistance program
- Extend paid absences for the Child Care Assistance program
- Address property tax valuation for childcare centers to reduce overhead
- Maximize high quality, childcare capacity through innovative local strategies



Support efforts to expand high-quality preschool opportunities for children, including all-day preschool.



ESSENTIAL NEEDS



Support the efforts of the OpportUNITY Affordable Housing Workgroup to address affordable housing and reduce cost-burdens for families seeking homeownership.



Support efforts to create pathways for expungement of eviction proceedings to allow tenants better access to housing.

Support strategies and solutions that help unhoused individuals and families access supportive and permanent housing.

Support the recommendations of the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services' Fostering Economic Mobility Workgroup.



Support direct appropriations for the overall food security system and the Double Up Food Bucks program from the Healthiest State Initiative, allowing SNAP participants better access to healthy, nutritious fruits and vegetables.



Support sustainable funding for public transportation systems in the central Iowa region and statewide.



HEALTH & WELL-BEING

P **LEAD** Support children’s mental health and well-being by leading the Coalition to Advance Mental Health in Iowa for Kids (CAMHI4KIDS).
\$ **INT**

LEAD Educate and promote policy change on the importance of overall oral health in partnership with the Oral Health Iowa coalition.
EDU
P

S **EDU** Support the recommendations of the Iowa ACEs 360 Coalition (Adverse Childhood Experiences).
P **INT**



ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

SPT Support quality job creation that provides the necessary training, education, and professional development to ensure workers are equipped to succeed in their work and career.
P
LOCAL

Support the recommendations of the Iowa Skills2Compete Coalition including:

O **LEAD** • Lead efforts to increase affordable access to quality childcare and promote stabilization in the childcare workforce.
INT **\$**
P

SPT • Increase flexibility in the state’s Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds to allow innovative workforce strategies to upskill workers.
P
INT

INT **SPT** • Support efforts to expand equitable access to broadband across Iowa.
LOCAL **\$**
P

LEAD • Maintain or increase current investments in Iowa’s skilled worker fund including adult basic education, PACE programs, pathway navigators, industry sector partnerships, and GAP tuition assistance.
\$
INT

SPT • Lead efforts to expand state engagement with the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment & Training program (SNAP E&T).
P
INT



EDUCATION SUCCESS

SPT Support quality work-based learning and strengthen pathways for youth employment with an emphasis on creating a plan for post-graduation career, training, or education opportunities.
P
INT

LEAD **\$** Educate policymakers on expanding credit-for-learning opportunities for in-school, after-school and out-of-school programs.
P **INT**

SPT **P** Continue supporting English-language learners by increasing opportunities and funding for instruction.
\$ **E**