



The Honorable John Thune
Senate Majority Leader
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
568 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
House Minority Leader
2267 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressional Leaders:

We are writing as members of the [Mayors Alliance to End Childhood Hunger](#), a nonpartisan coalition representing more than 450 mayors across all 50 states and Washington, DC, from large and medium cities to smaller communities and townships, working in partnership with Share Our Strength's [No Kid Hungry Campaign](#) to ensure that every child has the healthy food they need to thrive. Our offices are on the frontline of responding to challenges in our communities, and as mayors, we need every option available to fight childhood hunger.

We urge you to protect, strengthen, and fully fund federal food and nutrition programs in budget appropriations, reconciliation, and continuing resolutions. We strongly urge you to reject efforts to use federal nutrition program cuts to reduce or offset spending.

We express our concern for the growing number of children in our country facing food insecurity and hunger if these cuts are enacted. There are increasing pressures on the cost and availability of food, including viral illnesses in animals raised for consumption, a diminished number of agricultural workers, increased food costs, and continuing global conflict. Our cities are on the frontline of responding to challenges in our communities, and as mayors, we need every option available to fight childhood hunger.

Consider these priorities and funding requests for federal nutrition programs in the coming weeks:

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

SNAP is one of our nation's most powerful tools to end hunger. It helps 41+ million Americans, including 1 in 5 children, who participate in the program afford nutritious food.

- Protect and strengthen SNAP through appropriations processes and the Farm Bill.
- Preserve the adequacy of benefits and the ability to select more healthful dietary choices by updating the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) that Congress directed in the 2018 Farm Bill. Do not cut future benefits for all SNAP participants by restricting



future updates to the TFP. Such action would cause SNAP benefits to become increasingly inadequate to afford a healthy diet over time.

- Prioritize the dignity and autonomy of people facing hunger and reject efforts to restrict SNAP participants' ability to choose the groceries that work best for their families.
- Do not add additional work requirements for SNAP participants. Most adult SNAP participants are already subject to existing work requirements: general work requirements, stricter work requirements, and time limits for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs). SNAP rules already limit ABAWDs ages 18 to 54 to three months of benefits every three years unless they can document that they are in a work or training program for a minimum number of hours per week.

The majority of SNAP participants who can work are working; 84% of SNAP households had at least one person working in the past 12 months. SNAP work requirements limit how long individuals can receive food assistance, add onerous reporting requirements, and impose consequences if they cannot document meeting the requirements.

- Do not eliminate SNAP's Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) options. These options are structured to encourage families to attain financial stability while achieving administrative efficiency. Eliminating BBCE options removes a state's local control over tailoring the program to its unique needs. It will add to the state's administrative burden and create more hardship, especially for families already facing high housing and childcare costs.
- Do not cap SNAP benefits at 6 people per household. This is not a family-friendly proposal, and it unfairly penalizes large, struggling families. It would make it harder for more than 150,000 families to feed their children.

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a short-term intervention program for the high-risk population of pregnant and post-partum women, infants, and children up to age five who are at nutritional risk and live in households with low incomes. **About 6.6 million people participate in WIC monthly, including 4 of 10 infants in the United States.** We urge Congress to:

- Secure full funding for WIC to ensure every eligible family who seeks certification can be served.
- Protect implementation of the final rule updating WIC's food packages, which state and local WIC agencies are currently in the process of implementing.
- Pass the MODERN WIC Act to create permanent virtual service authority. This would allow participants to complete certification appointments in person at a WIC clinic or via phone or video.



School Meals

School meals provided through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs support our children's learning to their fullest potential in public and nonprofit private schools. **About 29.6 million students eat lunch at school, and 72 percent of those lunches are for students whose families qualify for free and/or reduced-price meals.** To support children and learning, Congress should:

- Reject proposed harmful changes to the National School Lunch Program's Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). CEP is a valuable tool for increasing efficiency and streamlining program administration; it leverages verified data from other means-tested programs. The proposal to limit CEP eligibility would dramatically increase administrative costs for schools nationwide. Proposals circulated by the House Ways and Means Committee could result in more than 24,000 schools serving more than 12 million children no longer being eligible to participate in CEP.
- Reject requiring eligibility verification of all school meals applications rather than a targeted percentage. As verification is a cost borne by schools and covered through meal reimbursements, additional time costs to verify applications by school personnel amount to an unfunded mandate for school districts that will result in schools with less money to spend with American food producers and suppliers and less for preparing nutritious meals for America's children.

In addition to food and nutrition programs, consider how proposed legislation and funding actions support or harm people and programs. We encourage the restoration of an enhanced Child Tax Credit that helps improve family economic stability and mobility.

Thank you for considering our concerns and priorities. If you have any questions, please contact the Mayors Alliance's staff lead, Aaron Goldstein, at mayors@strength.org.

CC: Sen. Boozman, Sen. Klobuchar, Rep. Thompson, Rep. Craig, Sen. Hoeven, Sen. Shaheen, Rep. Harris, Rep. Bishop, Sen. Cassidy, Sen. Sanders, Rep. Walberg, Rep. Scott

MAYORS ALLIANCE

TO END CHILDHOOD HUNGER

Sincerely,



Mayor Paige Cognetti
Vice-Chair, Mayors Alliance
Scranton, Pennsylvania

Mayor Pat Branson
Kodiak, AK

Mayor Mila Besich
Superior, AZ

Mayor Becky Daggett
Flagstaff, AZ

Mayor Mark Freeman
Mesa, AZ

Mayor Alexis Hermosillo
El Mirage, AZ

Mayor Regina Romero
Tucson, AZ

Mayor Lisa Gilbert
Elaine, AR

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San Rafael, CA

Mayor Martha Guerrero
West Sacramento, CA

Mayor Rex Richardson
Long Beach, CA

Mayor Helen Tran
San Bernardino, CA

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