

July 28, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Representative Boehner:

As organizations allied in the fight against child hunger, we are writing to urge you to bring the Child Nutrition Reauthorization bill to the floor.

Child nutrition programs offer the healthiest and most nourishing meals that many children receive each day. Unfortunately, far too many vulnerable children are not being reached by our current child nutrition programs. As a result, millions of low-income children are without access to nourishing food, especially at breakfast; in afterschool and child care settings; and when school breaks for the weekend or the summer.

Child Nutrition Reauthorization provides an opportunity to end child hunger by improving children's access to these important programs. With nearly 17 million children in our country at-risk of hunger, we cannot afford to wait another year to complete the reauthorization.

Earlier this month, the House Education and Labor Committee approved the Improving Nutrition for America's Children Act (H.R. 5504). This bipartisan legislation would strengthen the nutrition programs critical to the well-being of our nation's most vulnerable children and improve nutrition for all children. In particular, the bill would expand the afterschool supper program nationwide, better connect children enrolled in SNAP and Medicaid with the free school meals for which they are eligible, reduce the WIC certification period for children ages 1 to 4, improve the nutritional quality of meals, provide more vulnerable children with breakfast, increase access to summer food programs in rural areas, and close the weekend gap period.

Both the Senate and House have approved child nutrition legislation in committee, but Congress is running out of legislative calendar days to bring these bills to the floor, and much work remains to negotiate the strongest possible child nutrition bill before the reauthorization expires on September 30. If a robust Child Nutrition Reauthorization is not completed this year, millions of children will miss out on improved access to the nutritious food they need to learn and grow.

We are committed to working with you throughout the reauthorization process to fund and enact H.R. 5504 and provide children nationwide with increased program access and better nutrition. The next step in the process is to find offsets for H.R. 5504 and bring the bill to the floor. We are grateful for the leadership of Chairman Miller and his Subcommittee Chair and Ranking Member, Representatives McCarthy and Platts, in reporting a strong, bipartisan bill out of committee. We respectfully request that you work together to fully fund this legislation so the House of Representatives can pass the bill immediately upon returning from the August recess.

On behalf of our nation's children, please ensure that a strong child nutrition bill is completed this year. The health and future of America's children depend on it.

Sincerely,

Cc: House Education and Labor Committee Chairman George Miller
House Education and Labor Committee Ranking Member John Kline



The Alliance to End Hunger



MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger



American Commodity Distribution Association



Meals On Wheels Association of America



Association of Nutrition Services Agencies



National WIC Association



Bread for the World
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.



RESULTS



Community Food Security Coalition



Making the right food choices, together.
School Nutrition Association



Congressional Hunger Center



Share Our Strength



End Hunger Network



Society of St. Andrew



Feeding America



Food Research and Action Center



WhyHunger

