



Fighting Hunger through Child Nutrition Reauthorization Alliance to End Hunger's 2021 CNR Policy Priorities

Child nutrition reauthorization (CNR) is critical opportunity to help families recover from COVID-19 and ensure low-income children and families have the nutrition they need to thrive. Families of color have been specifically hit hard with hunger, but this inequity existed long before the pandemic. Ensuring equity is built into the child nutrition programs must be at the forefront of proposed child nutrition legislation and implementation. The Alliance to End Hunger supports the following policy recommendations to ensure more low-income children and families have access to benefits that supports their nutritional needs.

Summer Food Service Program & the Afterschool Meal Program

- **Permanently authorize and expand Summer EBT nationwide** as proposed in the American Families Plan (it is currently a demonstration program in a handful of states) and make it available to families during school breaks to supplement their household food budgets.
- **Pass the [Summer Meals Act](#)** that proposes to lower the area eligibility threshold from 50% to 40% free and reduced-price students; streamline the afterschool and summer meal programs so sponsors can feed children year-round; provide grants to address transportation barriers; and allows sites to serve a third meal to children.
- **Authorize a “non-congregate” option** building on successful models used during the COVID-19 response which allows the distribution of multiple meals at one time in rural and hard-to-reach communities, as well as in cases of extreme weather or emergencies.

National School Lunch & Breakfast Programs

- **Expand Medicaid direct certification nationwide** to improve access to school meals and eliminate unnecessary paperwork. To achieve this, states will need direct certification improvement grants.
- **Expand the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)** as proposed in the [American Families Plan](#). The proposal will increase the number of low-income children that have access to the well-documented benefits of free school meals through increasing the identified student percentage multiplier—making CEP more financially viable for schools—and by lowering the eligibility threshold for elementary schools.
- **Eliminate the reduced-price category** to simplify the school meals programs and support students from financially strapped low-income working families.

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

- **Pass the [Wise Investment in our Children Act \(WIC Act\)](#)** to address coverage gaps for postpartum mothers and children not yet enrolled in school by expanding eligibility.
- **Streamline certifications** through lessons learned during the pandemic to permit telehealth options and onboard new families via video or telephone options, extend certifications periods, and enhance coordination with healthcare providers to facilitate greater access to WIC services.
- **Invest in WIC technologies** to deliver nutrition education and breastfeeding support via telehealth options, permit benefit redemption through online shopping, further integrate data with other healthcare services, and streamline transactions at farmers markets.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

- **Pass the Access to Healthy Young Children Act** that addresses coverage gaps through enhanced benefits, expanded eligibility and streamlined program requirements to reduce administrative burdens.

Farm to School Program

- **Expand and strengthen the USDA farm to school grant program** through advancing equity by including requirements to reach underserved communities, as well as engage beginning, veteran, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

Access to Nutrition during Disasters and Public Emergencies

- **Allow the USDA secretary authority to issue waiver flexibilities during disasters and public emergencies.** To quickly respond to nutrition gaps for low-income families caused by closure of typical school and out-of-school-time meal programs due to disasters and public emergencies, allow the secretary to issue waivers to provide flexibilities to program operators to ensure meals can reach children in need.

[About the Alliance to End Hunger](#)

The Alliance to End Hunger engages diverse institutions to build the public and political will to end hunger at home and abroad. Our coalition of corporations, nonprofits, universities, foundations, individuals, and more work with their unique constituencies to raise the profile of the issues of hunger, nutrition, and agriculture to elected officials and broader stakeholders.