



March 24, 2022

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Chairwoman
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition and Forestry
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Robert “Bobby” Scott
Chairman
U.S. House Committee on Education
and Labor
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Boozman
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition and Forestry
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Education
and Labor
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow, Ranking Member Boozman, Chairman Scott, and Ranking Member Foxx,

We thank Congress for passing the FY2022 omnibus spending package, however, the Alliance to End Hunger* is deeply discouraged that Congress did not include an extension of the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) authority to grant nutrition waivers as needed through the 2022 – 2023 school year. **We are eager to quickly find a solution to this problem with you.**

The continuation of the waivers is crucial so that communities can be prepared and ensure that they can feed children in the face of continued challenges due to COVID. Schools and community meal providers are facing huge supply chain disruptions, rising food and transportation costs, and staff shortages. We are all hoping for a return to “normal,” but there’s nothing normal about the environment schools are operating in right now. The current nutrition waivers from USDA are critical to their continued operations in order to keep children nourished while learning in the classroom wherever possible. This is not the time to increase uncertainty for those trying to feed low-income children. Congress must authorize the USDA to extend these waivers through the 2022-2023 school year.

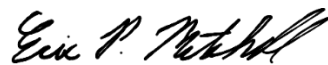
From the recently released [report from USDA](#), we know:

- The vast majority (90 percent) of School Food Authorities (SFA) are using the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) Waiver to serve meals in school year 2021-2022
- About 92 percent of SFAs reported experiencing challenges due to supply chain disruptions.
- SFAs using the SSO waiver were less likely to report a deficit as of October 2021.

This is why the waiver extension is so critical. Right now, child nutrition providers are working to establish sites to serve summer meals, create budgets, place food orders, coordinate and train staff, and alert families in need about how and where to find meal programs. Many are contemplating the need to scale back or even stop summer meal service altogether without waivers to streamline site selection and operations amid severe staffing shortages as well as reduce the risk of penalties should supply chain issues interfere with menus. Allowing the USDA's waiver authority to expire along with the current waivers on June 30, 2022 will make it much harder for schools and community partners to respond to new challenges in real time and fill the ongoing need among families and kids.

The anti-hunger community looks forward to working with Congress on any legislative pathway available to give USDA the necessary authority to assure that children can easily access nutrition this summer and into the new school year.

Respectfully,



Eric Mitchell
Executive Director
Alliance to End Hunger

The Alliance to End Hunger is a coalition of nearly 100 members—corporations, non-profits, faith-based organizations, universities, foundations, international organizations, and individuals—with a shared conviction that addressing hunger is essential.

Alliance to End Hunger Organizational Members:

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Amazon
American Peanut Council
Bank of America
Cantera Partners
Cargill, Inc.
Corteva Agriscience
DoorDash
GrainPro
HEB
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Non-Profit

1,000 Days
A Place at the Table
AARP
Association for International Agriculture and Rural
Development (AIARD)
Black Women's Health Imperative
The Breadfruit Institute
Congressional Hunger Center
Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA)
Edesia
The Farmlink Project
Feeding America
Food Enterprise Solutions
Food Rescue Hero
FoodFinder
GIVN
Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF)
The Global FoodBanking Network
Global Volunteers
Growing Hope Globally
Helping Hands Community
Helping the Hungry Virtually
The Hunger Project
Hungry Harvest
InterAction
March of Dimes
Meals on Wheels America
MEANS Database
Mercy Without Limits
Move For Hunger

National Farmers Union
National FFA Organization
National WIC Association
One Acre Fund
Opportunity International
The Outreach Program
Penny Appeal USA
Poetry X Hunger
ProMedica
RESULTS
Rise Against Hunger
The Root Cause Coalition
SAHAVE
Save the Children
Seed Programs International
Share Our Strength - No Kid Hungry
Souper Bowl of Caring
Trees for the Future
World Food Program USA

Faith-Based

Bread for the World
Christian Connections for International Health
Church World Service (CWS)
Convoy of Hope
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ECLA)
ICNA Relief
Islamic Relief USA
Lutheran World Relief
MAZON - A Jewish Response to Hunger
Partners Worldwide
Society of St. Andrew
World Renew

University

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AARP Foundation
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GlobalWorks Foundation
SODEXO Stop Hunger Foundation

**Alliance to End Hunger policy priorities are developed through consultation with the Alliance's Advocacy Committee. This letter is signed by the Alliance to End Hunger as an organization and does not necessarily reflect official views of the Alliance's individual members.*

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