



July 8, 2022

The Honorable Jim McGovern
Chairman, House Committee on Rules
370 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member, House Committee on Rules
2207 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman McGovern and Ranking Member Cole,

As you consider the rule for the reauthorization of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), the Alliance to End Hunger urges you to oppose the package of amendments filed by Representative Garamendi (#20, 21, 22, 25) to raise cargo preference for international food aid. This change would dramatically increase the cost of international food aid programs and risk the lives of millions of people who are facing hunger and malnutrition around the world.

Current law requires that 50% of all international food aid be transported on U.S. flagged ships. Studies have shown that cargo preference increases shipping costs and delays for international food aid and results in fewer people receiving life-saving aid.

At a time of unprecedented global food crisis, we cannot afford to increase shipping costs and bureaucratic delays to get much needed food to people around the world. COVID-19, the war in Ukraine, and global inflation have all contributed to increased costs and stresses on procuring, shipping, and providing critical food to the world's most vulnerable populations.

High shipping costs and long transportation times due to cargo preference mean fewer commodities and less food reaching those in need. These costs also reduce the purchasing power of U.S. implementing partners who procure and transport in-kind aid to areas around the globe facing dire food insecurity. Cargo preference for international food aid already increases shipping costs by an annual average of \$47.5 million, which translates to 2 million children and adults not receiving life-saving emergency food aid every year. The U.S. is a leader in addressing hunger crises around the world, and Congress has long recognized how this aid promotes American values and national security abroad. The proposed amendments mean that U.S. taxpayer investments towards these important goals would be used less efficiently than they could be.

Given the global food crisis, just last month the Alliance to End Hunger, along with others in the NGO community, came together urging Congress to waive cargo preference for international food aid programs. Increasing cargo preference rules for food aid, especially right now is a dangerous proposition.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Eric Mitchell
Executive Director