



## Statement of Principles for Child Nutrition Reauthorization

Congress has a unique opportunity in the upcoming reauthorization of the child nutrition programs to improve access, meal quality and nutrition for millions of children, particularly low-income children in child care (the Child and Adult Care Food Program - CACFP), in school (breakfast and lunch programs), during out-of-school time (afterschool, on weekends and during the summer), and at home (the WIC Program). Thousands of diverse national, state and local organizations are committed to a reauthorization bill that has a bold vision to eliminate child hunger. These organizations are now joined by a President-elect who during the campaign has set the goal of ending child hunger by 2015. To that end, these organizations are committed to passage of a strong child nutrition reauthorization bill in 2009.

The extraordinarily successful, cost-effective child nutrition programs play a critical role in helping children, especially those in low-income families, achieve access to quality nutrition, child care, educational and enrichment activities while improving their overall health, development, and school achievement. In addition, the adult component of CACFP provides needed nutrition assistance to elderly and impaired adults. However, federal support for these programs has not always kept pace with children's need for these programs, food cost inflation, the costs of delivering services, or increased scientific knowledge.

A well-conceived, adequately funded reauthorization bill can reduce hunger and food insecurity in America, help reduce childhood overweight and obesity, improve child nutrition and health, and enhance child development and school readiness. To this end we call on the Administration and Congress to enact a reauthorization bill that:

- 1) assures and strengthens program access and supports participation by underserved children and communities;
- 2) enhances nutrition quality and provides adequate meal reimbursements; and
- 3) modernizes technology and simplifies program administration and operation.

A substantial investment of new funding must be included in the Federal budget to achieve these goals. Without new program investments, it will be impossible for Congress to build upon the successes of the 2004 reauthorization. With enhanced Federal support, priorities for the 2009 Child Nutrition reauthorization should include:

### **I. Improving access to nutritious foods in schools, child care centers and homes, in afterschool programs, on weekends, during the summer, and in the home.**

School Meal Programs: Numerous studies document the positive effect school breakfast has on reducing hunger and improving nutrition, classroom behavior, test scores, grades, and school attendance. Through expansion of breakfast programs, including "universal" and in-classroom programs in all low-income areas, all children can receive breakfast at no charge to ensure that many more of them begin the day with the nutrition they need to succeed. Federal funding for breakfast commodities, currently only available to the school lunch program, also would support efforts to provide nutritious breakfasts to more children.

In addition, under the current school meals fee structure, many students from working poor



families cannot afford the reduced-price meal charge. Free meal eligibility should be expanded so that children from households with incomes up to 185 percent of the national poverty line can receive meals at no charge.

Child Care and Out-of-School Time Programs: Through CACFP, summer food and school meals programs, providers offer meals and snacks, combined with enriching recreational and educational out-of-school time activities, to preschoolers and to school-aged children after school and in the summer. CACFP provides essential nutrition and monitoring of care for young children in child care centers and family child care homes. Current area eligibility guidelines for family child care homes and afterschool and summer programs are inconsistent with other federal programs and leave many low-income families without access to the nutrition supports, especially in rural areas. Eligibility guidelines and the reimbursement structure need to be broadened to serve more children. In addition, suppers should be made available nationwide through afterschool programs in low-income areas to provide food, supervision, and educational and enrichment activities as more parents work and commute long hours. Reauthorization should also include strategies and resources to provide more nutrition assistance for children vulnerable to hunger on weekends and when schools are not in session. As programs expand to address the needs of participants, appropriate training and technical assistance also will be necessary to ensure meal quality and effectiveness.

WIC provides low-income at-risk pregnant and postpartum mothers and young children with critical nutrition services, health and social service referrals, and culturally appropriate nutritious foods that contribute to their overall health and well-being. Assuring access for all eligible families contributes to healthy pregnancies, improved birth outcomes, positive impacts on the incidence of childhood overweight and obesity, improved readiness for school, and reduced health care costs. As a discretionary program, it is critical for Congress to support WIC's current eligibility rules and nutritional support so that infants and young children continue to experience the full complement of WIC's health benefits.

## **II. Enhancing the nutritional environment to promote healthy eating habits for women and children.**

Child nutrition programs play a critical role in addressing one of our nation's most serious public health concerns -- childhood obesity and related health problems. As food costs rise, families, schools and child care, afterschool and summer food providers struggle to provide healthy meals for children.

National nutrition standards, consistent with the Dietary Guidelines, should be established for foods and beverages sold outside of the school meals programs. USDA should assist state and local school food service programs to work toward a consistent national interpretation of the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans while it completes the regulatory process for its new school meal standards. Improved nutritional health for our children can be achieved by increasing meal reimbursements to help schools, sponsors and providers improve meals and snacks and increasing children's access to fruits and vegetables in all forms (including those sourced from regional farms), whole grains and low-fat milk and reduced-fat dairy products.

The success of the WIC program in improving child health and nutrition outcomes is well-documented. Retaining current WIC eligibility rules and nutrition support is critical to promoting that success. In addition, Congress has an opportunity to further contribute to WIC's success by preserving the scientific basis for the WIC food package and ensuring that the



recommendations of the Institute of Medicine (IOM) are fully implemented. To that end, Congress should direct USDA to provide the full complement of foods recommended by the IOM for the new WIC food packages including yogurt and the full amount of fruit and vegetables the IOM determined was necessary for nutritionally sound WIC food packages. Moreover, Congress should refrain from dictating the addition of any foods, or increases in the amounts of foods, beyond the specific recommendations of the IOM.

Nutrition education funding for all child nutrition programs also will provide children at all stages of growth and development with the skills necessary to make lifelong healthy choices. Promoting and teaching healthy eating is essential to addressing childhood obesity and other diet-related health problems. Congress supported nutrition education and promotion by authorizing the creation of a USDA Team Nutrition Network in the 2004 Child Nutrition Reauthorization. Now, funds should be appropriated to carry out those provisions.

### **III. Modernizing and streamlining program operations to improve program integrity and efficiency.**

Across all programs, steps should be taken to streamline program operations, allow more cross program certification, increase flexibility, and maximize the use of technology and innovation to reduce barriers to eligible families and children and to reduce the administrative burden for service providers.

Recent congressional efforts to ease the paperwork burdens in the Summer Food Service Program have begun to attract more sponsors and children to this underutilized program. Additional resources should be available in areas with access barriers (e.g. transportation problems). To improve the accuracy of the school meals programs without impeding program access or overly burdening school personnel, Congress should also strengthen and expand direct certification for school meals (enrollment based on data matching) and expand options that eliminate or reduce paper applications (electronic applications and alternative data collection systems, e.g., use of neighborhood or district-wide census data).

Growth in the WIC Program requires policy makers to expand their commitment to technology enhancements – management information systems that meet core function needs and are Electronic Benefit Transfer-ready -- making it easier for mothers and young children to access WIC foods, protect program integrity and achieve economies and efficiencies in the delivery of services.

#### Conclusion:

In 1946, Congress passed the National School Lunch Act as a "measure of national security, to safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's children and to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities." Since then, Congress has improved the child nutrition and WIC programs to better serve children and families and adjust to changes in our families, workplaces, schools and communities. The upcoming child nutrition reauthorization provides an opportunity to build on this strong tradition and to ensure the continued health and well-being of our nation's most vulnerable population – our children.

**National Organizations as of 12/17/08**

ACORN  
Afterschool Alliance  
American Commodity Distribution Association  
American Dietetic Association  
American Diabetes Association  
American Federation of Teachers  
Association of Nutrition Services Agencies  
Bread for the World  
Catholic Charities USA  
Community Action Partnership  
Community Food Security Coalition  
Congressional Hunger Center  
E-Government Payments Council  
Feed the Children  
Feeding America  
Food Research and Action Center  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
Knowledge Learning Corporation  
MAZON-A Jewish Response to Hunger  
National Association of Elementary School Principals  
National Center for Law and Economic Justice  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Recreation and Park Association  
National WIC Association  
RESULTS  
School Nutrition Association  
Service Employees International Union  
Share Our Strength  
United Fresh Produce Association  
World Hunger Year

**Alabama**

Jefferson County Child Development Council, Inc, Birmingham

**Alaska**

Food Bank of Alaska, Anchorage  
The Association for the Education of Young Children

**Arizona**

Arizona Association of Family Child Care Providers  
Association of Arizona Food Banks  
World Hunger Education, Advocacy & Training (WHEAT), Phoenix

**Arkansas**

Bread of Life Ministries of AR, Inc., Texarkana  
Western Arkansas Childcare Providers

**California**

A World Fit for Kids, Los Angeles  
Alameda County Community Food Bank  
Apricot Producers of California  
California Adolescent Nutrition and Fitness Program, Berkeley  
California Association of Food Banks  
California Food Policy Advocates  
California Hunger Action Center  
CDI/Choices For Children, San Jose  
Central Valley Children's Services Network, Fresno  
Child Care Food Program Roundtable, San Francisco  
Child Nutrition Program of Southern California, La Mesa  
Citrus College Child Development Center, Glendora  
Dept. of Public Health, Humboldt County  
FCEOC Early Head Start, Fresno  
FranDelJA Enrichment Center  
Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano, Concord  
Imperial Valley Food Bank, El Centro  
Interfaith Council of Amador, Jackson  
International Institute of Los Angeles  
Learning Care Group  
Los Angeles Community College District  
Orange Children & Parents Together, Inc  
PHFE/ANGELS CCFP, Industry  
RESULTS, San Diego  
Sacramento Head Start Alumni Association, North Highlands  
San Diego Hunger Coalition  
San Francisco Food Bank  
Santa Cruz County Office of Education  
Shasta County Office of Education, Anderson  
Transitional Food and Shelter, Inc., Atascadero  
Valley Oak Children's Services, Chico  
Ventura Co. Child Care Food Program, Ventura  
YMCA of the East Valley, Redlands

**Colorado**

Colorado Anti-Hunger Network

**Connecticut**

Building Blocks, Old Lyme  
Collaborative Center for Justice, Hartford  
Connecticut Association for Human Services  
End Hunger CT!

**District of Columbia**

D.C. Hunger Solutions



Food and Friends  
Northwest Settlement House

### **Delaware**

Food Bank of Delaware, Newark  
Lutheran Office of Public DE Advisory Committee

### **Florida**

Alachua County Hunger Abatement Task Force  
America's Second Harvest of the Big Bend, Tallahassee  
Children's Services Council of Broward County  
Coalition for Independent Living Options, West Palm Beach  
Community Coordinated Care for Children, Inc.  
Cornerstone Family Ministries, Tampa  
Family Central, Inc  
Florence Fuller Child Development Centers, Inc.  
Florida Academy of Family Physicians--Obesity Task Force  
Florida Impact  
Manatee County Health Department, Sarasota  
Project Response, Inc., Fort Pierce  
Seminole County Public School System  
Single Mom Resource Foundation  
Sumter County School Board Foodservice

### **Georgia**

A Gift of Love Services of West Georgia  
Food Bank of Southwest Georgia, Albany  
Georgia Rural Urban Summit, Decatur  
Green Forest Community Development Corporation, Monticello  
KidsPeace Charter School of Georgia, Bowdon  
Octane Interactive  
Senior Connections, Chamblee  
Sheltering Arms, Jonesboro  
The Pantry, Douglasville

### **Idaho**

Community Action Partnership  
Idaho Department of Health and Welfare  
Experience Works  
Healthy Families of Idaho  
HighRoad Human Services  
Idaho Hunger Relief Task Force, Garden City  
North Idaho Circles Campaign  
Rural Roots, Inc.  
Specialized Needs Recreation  
St. Vincent de Paul of North Idaho  
Transitions in Progress  
Volunteers of America-Idaho

### **Illinois**



Greater Chicago Food Depository  
Illinois Food Bank Association  
Illinois Hunger Coalition  
Peoria Area Food Bank  
River Bend Foodbank, Moline

**Iowa**

In Home Daycare Center, Cresco  
United Methodist Church, Coralville

**Indiana**

Bartholomew County WIC Program  
Indiana Coalition for Human Services

**Kansas**

Marillac Center, Inc.  
United Community Services of Johnson County

**Kentucky**

Dare to Care Food Bank, Louisville  
Family and Children First, Louisville

**Louisiana**

Bread for the World, New Orleans, New Orleans  
LUNCH Program, Baton Rouge

**Massachusetts**

AIDS Project Worcester, Inc.  
Bay State Child Care Food Program, Inc., Worcester  
Community Servings, Roxbury  
Nutrition Education and Child Care Food Program, Lakeville  
Project Bread/The Walk for Hunger  
The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, Hatfield  
The Open Door/Cape Ann Food Pantry, Gloucester

**Maryland**

Allegany County Board of Education, Food Services  
Baltimore County Public School System  
Baltimore County Office of Food & Nutrition  
Baltimore County School Nutrition Association  
Brooklane Laurel School  
Charlesmont Elementary School  
Chesapeake College ECDC  
Consumer Federation of America, Chevy Chase  
Gregory Day Care Center  
Friends and Family Adult Day Services  
Happy Family Daycare Center  
Hernwood Elem  
Homeless Persons Representation Project  
Hopkins Learning Center



Karen Montgomery, Maryland House of Delegates, District 14  
Kennedy Krieger Institute  
Manna Food Center, Rockville  
Maryland Department of Education, Baltimore  
Maryland Hunger Solutions  
Maryland State Family Child Care Association  
MSU Upward Bound Program  
PACA Enterprises, Inc.  
Parkville High School  
Prince George's County Public Schools, Upper Marlboro  
School Nutrition Association-Maryland  
St. Veronica's Head Start  
Tai Sophia Institute  
Towson University Child Care Center  
University Christian Church Child Care Center  
Washington County Board of Education  
Washington County Public Schools, Hagerstown

### **Michigan**

Cristo Rey Community Center, Lansing  
Focus: HOPE, Detroit  
Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, Flint  
Latino Family Services, Detroit  
UMCOR, Belleville

### **Missouri**

Child Care Association, St. Louis  
Episcopal Community Services of Kansas City

### **Minnesota**

Hunger Solutions Minnesota, Minneapolis  
Minnesota School Nutrition Association, Eagan

### **Montana**

Child Care Partnerships, Helena  
Child Care Resources, Missoula  
Tobacco Valley Food Pantry, Eureka

### **North Carolina**

Action for Children North Carolina  
Bread For the World, North Carolina, Calabash  
Catholic Parish Outreach, Raleigh  
Durham County Health Department  
Interfaith Assistance Ministry  
Inter-Faith Food Shuttle, Raleigh  
MANNA FoodBank  
Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, Wilmington  
North Carolina Justice and Community, Raleigh  
School Nutrition Association of North Carolina

**Nebraska**

Provider's Network, Inc., Lincoln

**New Jersey**

Community FoodBank of New Jersey

Next Step, Edison

SEFAN, Englewood

St. Vincent de Paul Society, Middletown

**Nevada**

Berkley & Associates, Sparks

Three Square Food Bank, Las Vegas

**New York**

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)-Local 1151, New York

CAPTAIN Youth and Family Services, Clifton Park

Child Care Council of Nassau, Inc., Franklin Square

Claire Heureuse Community Center, Inc, Brooklyn

Cornell Cooperative Extension, Jeffersonville

Empire Justice Center, Albany

Food Bank of the Southern Tier, Corning

Food for All, Buffalo

God's Love We Deliver

Long Island Cares, Inc

Morrisania WIC Program

New York City Coalition Against Hunger

New York State Child Care Coordinating Council, Albany

Nutrition Consortium of NYS, Albany

Schenectady Inner City Ministry

Secular Franciscan Order, Wallkill

Society of Jesus, New York Province

St Vincent de Paul Peace and Justice Committee, Syracuse

TELC Food Pantry, New York

The WIC Association of NYS, Inc.

Urban Health Plan WIC Program

Zion Episcopal Church Food Pantry

**Ohio**

Shared Harvest Foodbank

Toledo NW Ohio Food Bank

**Oregon**

American Dietetic Assoc. and American Diabetes Association, Portland

Child Care Support Service, Gresham

FOOD for Lane County, Eugene

McMinnville Public Schools

Nutrition First CACFP (Community Action Agency), Salem

Oregon Food Bank

Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force

**Pennsylvania**

Brashear Association, Inc.  
Cancer Caring Center  
Canned Food Alliance  
Central PA Food Bank, Harrisburg  
Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley  
Community Food Warehouse of Mercer County  
Hayshire UCC, York  
Liberty Resources, Philadelphia  
PA Association of Regional Food Banks, Inc., Canonsburg  
Rainbow Kitchen Community Services  
SHARE Food Program, Inc., Philadelphia  
Squirrel Hill Food Pantry  
St. Michael's Food Bank  
Valley Points Family YMCA  
Westmoreland County Food Bank

**South Carolina**

Harvest Hope Food Bank, Columbia

**Texas**

Austin Recovery, Austin  
Capital Area Food Bank of Texas  
Center for Public Policy Priorities, Austin  
East Texas Food Bank  
Minute Menu Systems, Richardson  
San Antonio Food Bank, San Antonio  
Texas Food Bank Network

**Utah**

Citizens for Sustainability  
Coalition of Religious Communities-Utah, Salt Lake City  
Environmental Performance Group  
Salt Lake City Corporation  
Salt Lake City Open Classroom School  
Sarah Beth Coyote Foundation  
Slow Food Utah, Salt Lake City  
The Green Building Center  
The Robert G. Hemingway Foundation  
Utah Health Policy Project  
Utahns Against Hunger, Salt Lake City

**Virginia**

Child Nutrition, Inc., Warrenton  
Disabled Action Committee, Dale City  
Foodbank of the Virginia Peninsula

**Vermont**



Area Agency on Aging for Northeastern Vermont  
Boys & Girls Club of Rutland County  
Central Vermont Community Action Council, Barre  
Champlain Valley Agency on Aging  
Champlain Valley Head Start  
Colchester School District, Colchester  
Elm Hill School  
Fair Haven Union High School  
Fanny Allen Corporation  
Filkorn Public Relations  
First Congregational Church of Essex Junction  
Franklin/Grand Isle Food Council  
Friends of Burlington Gardens, Burlington  
GRACE Afterschool Program  
Green Mountain Farm-to-School  
Lamoille Family Center  
Lanpher Memorial Library  
Montpelier Senior Activity Center  
Mountain Road Productions, Inc  
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont  
Northfield Hunger Council  
PeaceVermont  
Richford Town School District  
Ripton Elementary School  
Rutland Community Cupboard  
Saint James Episcopal Church  
Saint Peter's Church  
Spike Advertising Incorporated, Burlington  
State of Vermont, Agency of Human Services  
The University of Vermont, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education  
Union Street School  
United Church of Christ, Barre  
United Way of Chittenden County, Burlington  
United Ways of Vermont  
Vermont Achievement Center, Rutland  
Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger, Burlington  
Vermont Department of Health—Morrisville District  
Vermont Food Education Every Day  
Winooski Family Center

### **Washington**

Food Connection Board  
Food Lifeline, Shoreline  
Food Security for Children Program, Solid Ground  
Kent School District-Food and Nutrition Services,  
NE Tri County Health District- WIC,  
Northwest Harvest, Seattle  
Phinney Neighborhood Association, Seattle  
School Nutrition Association-Washington  
WA Anti-Hunger and Nutrition Coalition, Seattle



White Center Food Bank, Seattle

**West Virginia**

Huntington Area Food Bank

**Wisconsin**

A Safe Place Child Care, Milwaukee

Hunger Task Force, Milwaukee

Seneca Foods Corporation