



The Honorable Pat Roberts
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition and Forestry
United States Senate – Kansas
Hart SOB Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition and Forestry
United States Senate – Michigan
Hart SOB, Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Conaway
Chairman
House Committee on Agriculture
United States House of Representatives –
Texas – 11th
RHOB, Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Ranking Member
House Committee on Agriculture
United States House of Representatives –
Minnesota – 7th
RHOB, Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Stabenow, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Peterson:

We are writing in response to yesterday's vote to proceed with a 2018 Farm Bill Conference Committee.

As Conferees begin their deliberation, we are writing to urge all members of the Conference Committee to oppose any proposals that reduce aid provided through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which serves as the country's most important anti-hunger program. With 40 million Americans still struggling with hunger, 4 million of whom live in California, we believe that the Conference Committee should consider proposals that increase SNAP assistance to be included in the final Farm Bill Conference report.

The Farm Bill represents the primary federal investment in reducing hunger among our nation's low-income children, working families, seniors, individuals, veterans and people with disabilities. The reauthorization of the 2018 Farm Bill presents an opportunity to reaffirm our nation's bi-partisan commitment to ending hunger. The bill only achieves this goal by strengthening, not cutting, our investments in SNAP and other vital anti-hunger programs.

According to the Census Bureau's 2015 Supplemental Poverty Measure, poverty and hunger exist in every corner of every state, including California. Anti-hunger programs like [SNAP help reduce hunger over four million low-income Californians, including two million children](#) \ [SNAP recipients live in small towns, cities and rural areas across California](#) and rely on the benefits

SNAP provides to put food on the table. [Nationwide, federal nutrition programs provide 19 out of 20 emergency meals](#), yet because SNAP benefits are inadequate to last the entire month, [nearly one-third of household that receive SNAP still rely on food banks to make ends meet](#).

SNAP also supports California's economic viability, while playing an important role in preventing hunger. SNAP drives over [\\$7 billion in total economic annually](#) and every billion in SNAP generates approximately 14,000 jobs, particularly in our state's robust food and farming sectors and helps respond to changing economic conditions and in times of disaster, which are all too common in our state.

In May, over 100 statewide and regional organizations signed onto a [letter](#) addressed to the California Congressional Delegation opposing the House Farm Bill (H.R. 2) which proposes cuts to SNAP that would increase hunger and hardship for California's most vulnerable residents. While our state's anti-hunger community [does not oppose the Senate's bi-partisan approach](#), we were disappointed that, with so much work to be done in alleviating poverty and hunger for millions of low-income Americans and their communities, that it does not propose changes through SNAP to increase the ability of the program to reduce hunger, like ending the shelter cap and increasing the value of SNAP food benefits which currently provide less than \$2.00 per meal per day. Still, we are hopeful that the Conference Committee's final report will embrace the Senate's approach and reauthorize critical food, farming and nutrition programs while safeguarding our most vulnerable communities from hunger.

We are grateful for your service and your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Jessica Bartholow, Western Center on Law and Poverty (jbartholow@wclp.org)

Andrew Cheyne, California Association of Food Banks (andrew@cafoodbanks.org)

Rachel Tucker, California Association of Food Banks (rachel@cafoodbanks.org)

Jared Call, California Food Policy Advocates (jared@cfpa.net)

2-1-1 Humboldt Information and Resource Center

AC Strategic Solutions

Alameda County Community Food Bank

Alameda Food Bank

All Saints Episcopal Church

California Hunger Action Coalition (CHAC)

California Partnership

Catholic Charities of Yolo-Solano

Children's Defense Fund – CA

CoCo Kids

Community Action Partnership of Orange County

Community Clinic Consortium of Contra Costa and Solano

Contra Costa County

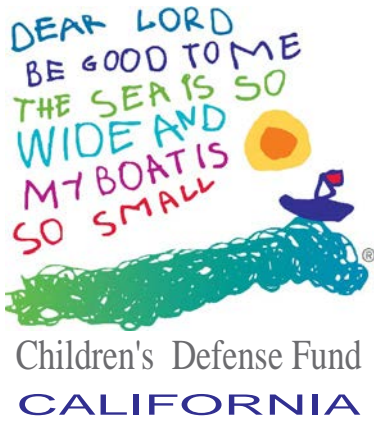
Contra Costa Family Economic Security Partnership

Ensuring Opportunity Campaign to End Poverty in Contra Costa

Feeding San Diego
First 5 Alameda County
Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano
Food for People, the Food Bank for Humboldt County
FOOD Share of Ventura County
Foodbank of Santa Barbara County
Hunger Action Los Angeles (HALA)
Hunger Advocacy Network (San Diego)
Imperial Valley Food Bank
Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles
Jewish Family Service San Diego
Los Angeles Food Policy Council
Merced County Food Bank
Mercy Brown Bag Program
Multi-Faith ACTION Coalition
National Council of Jewish Women | Los Angeles
Orange County Food Access Coalition
Orange County Food Bank
Placer Food Bank
Resultz Health and Fitness
Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services
San Diego Food Bank
San Diego Hunger Coalition
San Francisco-Marin Food Bank
Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties
Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County
Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Cruz County
Sharp HealthCare
The Redwood Empire Food Bank
Tri Valley Haven
Yolo Food Bank

cc:

Honorable Kevin McCarthy, U.S. House of Representatives, Majority Leader
Honorable Nancy Pelosi, U.S. House of Representatives, Minority Leader
Honorable Jim Costa, U.S. House of Representatives, 2018 Farm Bill Conferee
Honorable Doug LaMalfa, U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Agriculture
Honorable Jeff Denham, U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Agriculture
Honorable Jimmy Panetta, U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Agriculture
Honorable Barbara Lee, U.S. House of Representatives
Honorable Dianne Feinstein, U.S. Senate
Honorable Kamala Harris, U.S. Senate
Will Lightborne, Director, California Department of Social Services
Frank J. Mecca, Executive Director, California Welfare Directors Association



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We are Advocates and Communities Taking Initiative for Our Neighbors



of SANTA CLARA and SAN MATEO COUNTIES

