

August 25, 2020

The Honorable Alma Adams
U.S. House of Representatives
2436 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Adams:

On behalf of First Focus Campaign for Children, a bipartisan children's advocacy organization dedicated to making children and families the priority in federal policy and budget decisions, we are writing to express our thanks and support for FEED the Children Act (H.R. 6801).

Last year alone, 22 million children relied on their schools to provide them with at least one meal during their school day.¹ This means that school lunches are already pivotal for an abundance of children who would otherwise be uncertain where their next meal was coming from, but this is even more crucial during Covid-19. With this additional strain on schools, the need for economic aid is even more important to ensure these meals continue without impacting schools' abilities to operate.

In April alone, food insecurity tripled in households with children.² Despite this spike, 1,894 districts around the United States provided 134 million meals just in April.³ School employees are working vigorously to ensure hungry children are fed, but they are struggling.

Unfortunately, many schools are losing money due to the pandemic. In a recent study of almost 2,000 districts, 68% of school meal program directors expect financial loss for their programs while an additional 23% express uncertainty about future funding.⁴ There is an estimated \$200,000 loss per district that could go as high as \$2.35 million due to additional costs of safety measures necessary to protect both children and employees.⁵ Even with the possibility of financial loss, the School Nutrition Association found that most schools continued serving meals regardless.⁶

By reimbursing schools for providing assured meals, The FEED the Children Act will allow schools to continue providing crucial meals to students without facing additional financial burden. It will relieve schools of the choice to suspend these critical programs that help so many families. This act allows schools to continue their tireless efforts to provide healthy, substantive, safe meals for students so they can thrive.

¹ <https://www.businessinsider.com/free-school-lunch-kids-summer-hunger-2019-5#:~:text=To%20support%20these%20families%2C%20several,the%20National%20School%20Lunch%20Program.>

² https://www.ipr.northwestern.edu/documents/reports/food-insecurity-covid_week1_report-13-may-2020.pdf

³ <https://schoolnutrition.org/news-publications/press-releases/2020/sna-survey-reveals-covid-19-school-meal-trends-financial-impacts/>

⁴ [Ibid.](#)

⁵ <https://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/Article/2020/05/19/SNA-School-nutrition-programs-face-crippling-financial-losses-that-threaten-service-for-next-year#>

⁶ https://schoolnutrition.org/uploadedFiles/11COVID-19/3_Webinar_Series_and_Other_Resources/COVID-19-Impact-on-School-Nutrition-Programs-Part2.pdf

With so much uncertainty in our country today, it is reassuring that children will at a minimum have guaranteed meals and a supportive, funded educational environment this coming school year. We thank you for your leadership on behalf of children and families, and we look forward to working with you to help advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bruce Lesley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a blue highlight behind it.

Bruce Lesley
President