

August 25, 2020

The Honorable Joe Neguse
U.S. House of Representatives
1419 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Michael Bennet
U.S. Senate
261 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Neguse and Senator Bennet:

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 The Food for Families in Crisis Act of 2020.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is an incredibly effective anti-poverty measure that helps low-income families get food on the table. Children make up nearly 44 percent of all SNAP participants, making it an especially important nutrition program for kids.¹ Since February, need for SNAP has increased significantly; the program has seen almost 7 million additional applications for benefits.²

Low-income families are especially at risk of food insecurity. Food insecurity can lead to fatigue and reduced immune response which is even more worrisome today. Over the long term, food insecurity can lead to “developmental, psychological, physical, and emotional harms” for children.³ Yet many of the lowest-income families have not seen any increase in their SNAP benefits, nearly 40 percent, as benefits were only increased up to the maximum monthly amount.

The Food for Families in Crisis Act of 2020 will help ensure that children and families receive nutritional meals, by increasing the maximum SNAP benefits by 15 percent and ensuring the use of broad-based categorical eligibility so that even more families in need can access the program.

Covid-19 has undoubtedly emphasized the need for federal nutrition assistance programs. Regardless of a pandemic, though, children deserve a guarantee of healthy meals. With an increasing threat to this basic right, The Food for Families in Crisis Act of 2020 is all the more crucial. 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.

¹ <https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/chart-book-snap-helps-struggling-families-put-food-on-the-table>

² <https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/boost-snap-to-capitalize-on-programs-effectiveness-and-ability-to-respond>

³ <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp2005638>

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bruce Lesley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent underline under the letter "L" in "Lesley".

Bruce Lesley
President