



May 3, 2023

The Honorable Grace Meng
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Meng,

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 support for the Hot Foods Act of 2023.

9 million children across the United States experience food insecurity. Access to proper nutrition during childhood directly influences health and well-being throughout a child's life. Food insecurity is specifically associated with poorer physical and mental health, lower school performance, and diminished psycho-social functioning. Congress must bolster SNAP ensure our children are kept fed and well-nourished so that the negative impacts of food insecurity will not be felt for years to come.

Currently, legislation prohibits SNAP recipients from purchasing hot, pre-prepared foods. This provides yet another arbitrary burden for SNAP recipients. Requiring children to eat frozen or processed alternatives to fresh, prepared foods limits their access to healthy meals. For example recipients can purchase frozen chicken, but not fresh, with no practical benefit to children. Unnecessary rules like these prohibit families from making the best choices for their children's health and well-being.

Allowing SNAP recipients to purchase hot foods allows parents who may be working multiple jobs and experiencing "time poverty" to still provide hot and nutritious meals that their children need. Additionally, families experiencing housing insecurity may not have the means to warm frozen meals or cook packaged products, creating an additional barrier between healthy meals and children. By alleviating this unnecessary stipulation, the Hot Foods Act of 2023 will help children receive the meals they need regardless of circumstance.

We commend you for your efforts to make hot and ready foods more accessible for America's children and remove unnecessary burdens from SNAP. We look forward to working with you to pass the Hot Foods Act of 2023.

Sincerely,

Bruce Lesley
President