



FIRST FOCUS

CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN

November 4, 2015

The Honorable Suzanne Bonamici
The United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Elise Stefanik
The United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Bonamici and Representative Stefanik:

On behalf of First Focus Campaign for Children (FFCC), a bipartisan advocacy organization committed to making children and their families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions, I would like to thank you for your leadership in introducing The Early Childhood Nutrition Improvement Act of 2015 (H.R. 3886). Healthy nutrition is an essential building block of a healthy childhood, so First Focus Campaign for Children advocates based on the idea that no child in our nation should go hungry, and every child should have access to healthy and nutritious food.

The most recent data released by the Census Bureau reports that over 20 percent of American children are living in poverty and over 10 percent of children under the age of 6 are living in extreme poverty. These numbers, coupled with USDA reports showing that over 15 million children were food insecure in the last year, paint a troubling picture for America's kids. Poverty and hunger both pose serious threats to healthy development and early learning. That is why Congress must continue to strengthen programs like the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) that provide healthy meals to our youngest children.

Currently, the CACFP serves healthy meals and snacks to nearly 4 million children in family child care homes, child care centers, and afterschool programs across the country. The program is essential in providing these children with the nutrients they might not receive outside of an early learning program and can be influential in developing healthy eating habits at a young age. The Early Childhood Nutrition Improvement Act of 2015 would make important changes to the program, ensuring that kids can receive an additional meal or snack when in full day care as well as simplifying the eligibility process to ease the burden on smaller centers.

These common sense improvements to the CACFP are a much-needed step in the right direction towards addressing the current state of child poverty and hunger in America.

We welcome the opportunity to continue working with you on this legislation and other proposals to improve the well-being of America's children.

Sincerely,

President