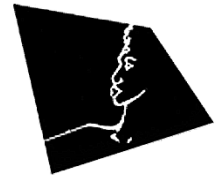


National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc.®

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November 19, 2010

N C B W
100

Congressional Black Caucus
2444 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Member of the Congressional Black Caucus:

The week after Thanksgiving the U.S. House of Representatives will take up the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act. This bill would make significant improvements to the child nutrition programs to address hunger and obesity. On behalf of President M. DeLois Strum and other members of the board of directors of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, I urge you to support the bill.

The need for strengthening the child nutrition programs is especially important for African American children, given the high rates of obesity in Black youths (36 percent are overweight or obese, compared with less than 30 percent of White children). A number of factors cause this disparity. African American children are exposed to a higher concentration of fast-food restaurants, fewer grocery stores, higher frequency of junk-food advertisements, and fewer safe areas to exercise. In addition, they have less access to healthy fruits and vegetables at lunch time. In schools with a high proportion of Black students, 47 percent of Black middle-school students receive fruits and vegetables compared to 63 percent of students in schools that are predominately White.

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act would update school nutrition standards to remove junk-food and sugary beverages from a la carte lines and vending machines from all schools. The bill would provide more resources to enable schools to serve healthier school meals and strengthen school wellness policies to improve opportunities for nutrition education and physical activity.

Currently, over a third of Black families receive food assistance. Of the families that receive it, 82 percent rely on the child nutrition programs as a key source of nutrition and 36 percent of families participate in WIC. The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act would benefit those families by making it easier for children to enroll in the school-meal programs, by providing after-school meals to low-income children, and by improving community eligibility to allow more schools to offer universal free breakfasts and lunches.

We realize that some members of the Congressional Black Caucus have hesitated to pass this important bill because it is paid for, in part, by ending a temporary increase in SNAP (food stamp) benefits five months early. We support the restoration of that benefit and are reassured by the President Obama's public commitment to do so after the Healthy-Hunger-Free Kids Act is passed.

Thank you and I look forward to hearing how you will vote on this important bill.

Sincerely,

Shirley L Poole, Executive Director
National Coalition of 100 Black Women

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