



June 11, 2010

The Honorable George Miller,
United States House of Representative
2205 Rayburn Bldg
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Miller;

On behalf of our 202 food banks and the nearly 14 million children served by our charitable feeding network, I am writing to thank you for your leadership in moving legislation forward to improve our federal child nutrition programs. We are very grateful for the legislative proposals you and your colleagues, Subcommittee Chair Carolyn McCarthy and Ranking Subcommittee member Todd Platts worked so hard to put together and fully appreciate the challenges you all face in completing this worthy legislation this year. Our organization stands with you in this battle and we are ready to help you and your dedicated staff in any way that we can to ensure access to healthy and nutritious food for all of our nation's children.

Our network is particularly grateful for the proposed changes in H.R. 5504 that seek to fill the extensive gaps in access to nutrition programs for millions of poor children. As you know, our network has been actively engaged in helping to fill these gaps. More than 120 member food banks and local feeding agencies operate more than 1,500 *Kids Cafes* serving some 124,000 children annually. Additionally, more than 140 of our food banks and member agencies are working with schools to provide nourishing food packages for low-income children to take home from school for weekends and during the summer months when child nutrition programs are not available to them. Our weekend programs reach some 190,000 children and our summer programs serve more than 115,000 children each year.

While our efforts to operate and expand these programs continue, it is clear that many more needy children must be reached through federal child nutrition programs. The proposals in your bill go a long way to reaching these children by improving access to healthy and nutritious foods in school, out-of school, and in the summer and during weekends and by removing administrative barriers to program operation and expanding program outreach.

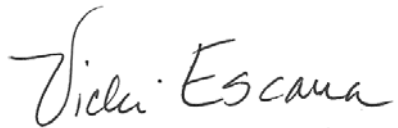
Our food banks and charitable feeding agencies see first-hand the desperation of millions of families who are struggling to feed their children in these difficult economic times. I know that I do not have to tell you that the number of children facing hunger has continued to grow as the economy has worsened and unemployment persists at record high levels. That is why enactment of child nutrition legislation this year is so critically important.

We understand that the battle is not yet over, but your leadership and that of your colleagues has given us hope for the completion of robust and fully funded Child Nutrition Reauthorization law by the end of this year. Accomplishing this will mean that millions of children won't have to wait longer for the

promise of the nutritious foods they need to learn and grow, and we can move the country forward to achieve President Obama's goal of ending childhood hunger by 2015.

We pledge our support for your efforts and those of your colleagues and deeply appreciate all that you do to ensure that everyone has a share in our nation's economic recovery. Please do not hesitate to call upon me and our staff if we can be of further help to you in your important work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vicki Escarra". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vicki Escarra
President and CEO
Feeding America

cc: Honorable Carolyn McCarthy, Chair, and Honorable Todd Platts, Ranking Member
Healthy Families and Communities Subcommittee, House Committee on Education and Labor.

