

July 16, 2015

**Subject: Co-sponsor the Stop Child Summer Hunger Act of 2015**

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The undersigned California-based organizations are writing to express our united support for H.R. 2715 / S. 1539, a bill that has the power to significantly decrease child hunger during the summer months. We are a diverse group of organizations from across the state of California representing anti-hunger, public health, social service, direct service, and education. We have come together to ask our California Senators and Representatives to co-sponsor the *Stop Child Summer Hunger Act of 2015* and to maintain support when this topic is discussed and debated in the Reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act.

In a nation with as many resources as the United States, we expect that our children spend their summer days learning, growing, and playing – not worrying about when and where they'll have their next meal. Yet, each summer, millions of kids in California and across the country have uncertain access to an absolutely essential resource: nutritious meals. Our children deserve better and we look to you to help ensure that all kids have an equal opportunity to reach their full potential. Children must have access to nutritious meals, regardless of the season, in order to be and achieve their very best.

In 2014, nearly 2 million Californian kids who benefitted from federally funded, free or reduced-price lunches during the school year missed out on similar lunches during the summer. Even more worrisome, the most recent available data indicates that at least 2 million families with children in California struggle with food insecurity (the inability to consistently afford enough food).

Representative Susan Davis of California and Senator Patty Murray of Washington have introduced the Stop Child Summer Hunger Act (H.R. 2715 / S. 1539), a policy solution that fills in the gap in access to nutritious meals during the summertime. H.R. 2715 / S. 1539 would expand access to a summer nutrition model that has been proven effective: the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) for Children program. In its test phase, Summer EBT eliminated the most severe form of food insecurity by one-third and reached up to 75 percent of eligible children. Children who participated in Summer EBT also ate more fruits and vegetables and whole grains, as well as fewer added sugars from sweetened beverages.

Summer EBT would complement the federal summer meal programs that are currently operating at sites in California and throughout the nation. When and where these sites are able to reach kids, they provide a tremendous service. However, 80 percent of low-income California kids who benefit from much-needed school meals are not served by summer meal sites. The congregate feeding approach on its own is unlikely to meet the nutritional demands of all children in need, particularly those who face transportation issues, extreme weather conditions, a lack of walkable routes, threats to neighborhood safety, or other barriers that impede their access to summer meal sites.

Not one child in this land of plenty should go without enough food. The Summer EBT for Children demonstration serves as a well-tested effective model for providing summertime nutrition assistance to all children in need. Please join Representative Davis and Senator Murray in taking a stand against childhood hunger.

Sincerely,

Alameda County Community Food Bank  
Association of California School Administrators  
Asian Law Alliance  
California Association of Food Banks  
California Center for Public Health Advocacy  
California Food Policy Advocates  
Children Now  
Coalition of California Welfare Rights Advocates  
Community Action Partnership of Kern County  
Community Food Bank  
Feeding America Riverside/San Bernardino  
Feeding America San Diego  
Food Bank Coalition of San Luis Obispo  
Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano  
Food Bank of Santa Barbara County  
Food Bank of Yolo County  
Food Finders, Inc.  
Food for People, Inc.  
HOPE in the Saint Irenaeus Parish  
Hunger Action Los Angeles  
Hunger Advocacy Network  
Imperial Valley Food Bank  
Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles  
Jewish Family Service of San Diego  
Los Angeles Regional Food Bank  
OC Food Access Coalition  
Orange County Food Bank  
Orangewood Children's Foundation and The Academy  
Orfalea Foundation  
Project Plateful  
Redwood Empire Food Bank  
Roots of Change  
San Diego Food Bank  
San Diego Hunger Coalition  
San Francisco-Marin Food Bank  
Second Harvest Food Bank Orange County  
Second Harvest Food Bank San Joaquin & Stanislaus  
Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Clara & San Mateo  
Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County  
Second Harvest Santa Cruz  
St. Anthony Foundation  
The Resource Connection Food Bank  
Trinity Guild, La Purisima Catholic Church  
Western Center on Law and Poverty  
Women Organizing Resources, Knowledge and Services (WORKS)  
Yuba-Sutter Gleaners Food Bank, Inc.