



July 22, 2022

The Honorable Robert C. “Bobby” Scott  
Chair, House Committee on Education and  
Labor  
2328 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Suzanne Bonamici  
Chair, Civil Rights and Human Services  
Subcommittee  
2231 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Scott and Chairwoman Bonamici,

On behalf of the Alliance to End Hunger, I would like to thank you for your leadership and commitment to child nutrition. Your recent introduction of the *Healthy Meals, Healthy Kids Act* marked a significant step in long-overdue Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR). As a coalition of over 100 companies, nonprofits, foundations, universities, healthcare organizations, and individuals, the Alliance to End Hunger shares your desire to ensure kids do not fall behind due to poor nutritional outcomes, and we commend your desire to incorporate lessons learned from the pandemic into new legislation. We also wish to work with you to improve the legislation and push for similar policies in the Senate.

The *Healthy Meals, Healthy Kids Act* addresses urgent needs, especially in the context of the current pandemic. As you noted in your July 20 press release on the legislation, there were already “2.7 million households with children did not have reliable access to nutritious food.” You also noted the disproportionate impact of food insecurity on BIPOC households. The legislation addresses important priorities for the Alliance including:

- Permanent authorization and expansion of Summer EBT nationwide;
- Lowering the area eligibility threshold for summer meals;
- Allowing summer sites to serve a third meal to children;
- Expanding Community Eligibility within School Meal Programs;
- Extending WIC eligibility of children to six years; and
- Allowing CACFP providers to serve an additional meal or snack.

While these provisions are encouraging, we are disappointed that the bill does not include language authorizing a “non-congregate” option for summer meals. This is a proven method to ensure that kids have equitable access to a summer meal. With higher food costs and gas prices we must do everything we can to ensure that all children have access to both school and summer meals.

The Alliance is available to work with the Committee to help strengthen the bill and build bipartisan support in the House and for final passage.

We are at a critically important point in time to ensure the future health and wellbeing of our kids. Child Nutrition Reauthorization is crucial, and we are eager to work with you to ensure a strong bill passes both the House and Senate and reaches the President’s desk. Thank you again for your leadership on this issue.

Respectfully,

Eric Mitchell  
Executive Director