

May 18, 2023

Chairman Glenn “GT” Thompson
U.S. House Committee on Agriculture
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member David Scott
U.S. House Committee on Agriculture
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thompson and Ranking Member Scott:

Currently across the globe, over 800 million people do not know where their next meal will come from. More than 30 million children are suffering from acute malnutrition, and 150 million more women are hungry than men. Hunger and malnutrition are rising globally due to increased intensity and frequency of extreme weather events, entrenched conflict, economic crises, and disruptions to agricultural inputs due to the conflict in Ukraine.

Families and communities are coping with these compounding challenges by selling off productive assets like livestock, skipping meals, taking their children out of school, and arranging early marriages – deepening the hole from which they must recover. Humanitarian assistance is saving lives but cannot address the long-term needs of millions. **In light of this dire situation, we the undersigned CEOs urge you to reauthorize and strengthen international food and nutrition programs in Title III of the Farm Bill.**

We are grateful for the United States Government’s leadership in the fight against global hunger. U.S. international food security programs save lives in times of emergency and address the root causes of food insecurity and malnutrition, thus building resilience within communities to withstand future shocks and stressors. Beyond emergency assistance, these programs build local agriculture markets that eventually enable the recipient countries to become strong trading partners with the United States.

In the face of unprecedented hunger and malnutrition, it is crucial to invest in and advance holistic, multi-sectoral approaches to agricultural development that help people feed themselves. We know that these types of approaches work. Programs that give communities the tools to improve agricultural productivity and food storage, manage water, make nutritious food more accessible, and adapt to extreme weather events can minimize the severity of the next disaster and reduce the need for expensive emergency interventions. Evidence shows that every \$1 invested in these multi sectoral programs saves \$3 in humanitarian aid.

As you know, this year we have the opportunity to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of these programs through the reauthorization of the Farm Bill. Title III of the Farm Bill authorizes several important international food assistance programs including Food for Peace Title II (P.L. 480), McGovern-Dole Food for Education, Food for Progress, and the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust. As U.S.-based organizations implementing and advocating for international food and nutrition security programs, we are using every ounce of our expertise, evidence, and

creativity to maximize every dollar. **We ask that you reauthorize and strengthen these programs this year through small, but impactful updates to alleviate rising hunger and malnutrition.**

Food for Peace Title II authorizes non-emergency programs, called Resilience Food Security Activities (RFSAs), to reduce poverty, malnutrition, and food insecurity through tools such as water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions, agriculture and alternative livelihoods training, maternal child health and nutrition best practices, and good governance. Currently, restrictions and requirements within the Food for Peace Act limit our ability to meet the legislative mandate to build resilience and implement the strongest “income-generating, community development, health, nutrition, cooperative development, agricultural, and other developmental activities”.¹

The non-emergency programs are a small portion of Food for Peace – just 14% of the overall program – but have an enormous impact. **We ask that you protect the funding level for Food for Peace non-emergency programs (the “safe box”) as well as make commodities within these non-emergency programs an option and not a requirement.** We continue to support the emergency programs of Food for Peace Title II without alteration. We also ask that you streamline Food for Peace award management to reduce administrative burdens on implementing partners and lower barriers to entry for new or local implementing partners.

Our proposed change to Food for Peace non-emergency programs will ensure RFSAs can be tailored to the context and fulfill the mandate to move communities away from dependency and toward reliance and self-sufficiency. This change would provide the full range of tools while giving programs the ability to use the right tool for each unique context. For example, in Ethiopia, there is a continued need for in-kind commodities in non-emergency programs. In other instances, being able to design non-emergency programs to support communities to better feed themselves would be the most effective use of funds.

Finally, we ask you to strengthen McGovern-Dole’s ability to reduce hunger for school children, encourage literacy and primary education, and promote agricultural development in food-insecure countries. **We support updating McGovern-Dole Food for Education’s local and regional procurement (LRP) component to a range of 10 to 20% and allow for capacity building activities for local farmers.** This would significantly boost the ability of programs to supplement donated U.S. commodities with nutritious fresh produce from neighborhood farms, improve the local economy, and ensure these school feeding programs are on track to successfully graduate from U.S. assistance.

¹ 7 U.S. Code § 1721(7); 7 U.S. Code § 1722(e)(1)(C).

These small but critical updates will strengthen our ability to implement tailored, effective, and evidence-based development programming that alleviates immediate hunger and builds effective food systems for the long term. We are grateful for the strong bipartisan support of these programs and we look forward to working with you towards these goals.

Sincerely,



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CEO
Action Against Hunger




Michael Kruger
President
ADRA International



Eric P. Mitchell
Executive Director
Alliance to End Hunger



Mark Del Monte,
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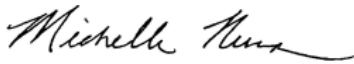
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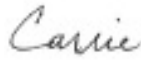
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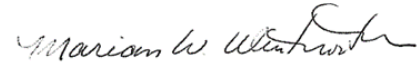
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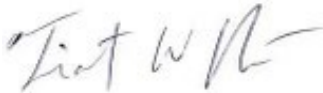
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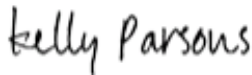
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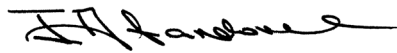
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