



Action Alert!

Support the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (S.3307)

November 12, 2010

BACKGROUND:

Soon, Congress will have the opportunity, during what is referred to as the “lame-duck” session, to renew legislation covering various child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch and Breakfast, Child and Adult Care Food, After-school Snack, Summer Food Service, and Women, Infant and Children (WIC) Food Programs.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 2009, the number of Americans suffering from hunger or living in homes on the edge of hunger was 49 million, including 17 million children. The great recession is taking an even greater toll on the number of children and adults who increasingly go to bed and wake up hungry. In a recent survey, Catholic Charities agencies across the country reported an increase of 83% in working poor families and also an increase in middle class families seeking assistance, and specifically, a 53% increase in need for emergency financial assistance. In the 2009-2010 academic year, 50 percent of Catholic Schools participated in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs, serving approximately 175,000 lunches and 88,000 breakfasts daily.

IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED:

Please contact your Representatives (U.S. Capitol switchboard is 202-224-3121 or go to: www.house.gov), and urge him or her to **make child nutrition a priority** by supporting the strongest possible funding levels and improvements to be able to reach and help those most in need. Ask him or her to:

- Pass the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (S.3307); which will improve nutrition for all children; increase access to healthy meals; and takes an important step forward in addressing both child hunger and obesity
- Ensure that SNAP (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program formerly known as the Food Stamp Program) be safeguarded from further cuts; and
- Ensure that current proposed cuts to the SNAP program be restored or funded through other means as soon as possible

OUR CATHOLIC TRADITION:

In *For I Was Hungry and You Gave Me Food*, the U.S. bishops reiterated that a primary goal of food and agricultural policy should be providing basic food and nutrition for all. In *Food Policy in a Hungry World*, the bishops called for strengthening the domestic food assistance programs to ensure that no one in America goes hungry or suffers from malnutrition. **"When the economy fails to provide the jobs and income necessary to prevent hunger and malnutrition, the various local, state, and national food assistance programs must be funded and expanded to provide food to all in need."**

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, Catholic Charities USA, and the National Catholic Educational Association support the strongest possible funding for critical program improvements in federal child nutrition programs and WIC in order to reach and enroll the children and families who need it most and to provide the nutrition that all kids and adults need to thrive.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/agric.shtml>

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