

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 16, 2015

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi:

We write to express our support for a strong Child Nutrition Reauthorization that strengthens and improves child nutrition programs in school and during out of school time.

This Child Nutrition Reauthorization offers the opportunity to provide significant improvements to the Summer Food Service Program. According to the most recent data, only 18 percent of children who receive free or reduced price meals at school also receive a summer meal. This leaves the majority of low-income children across the country without access to the nutrition they need during the summer months.


Transportation barriers, severe weather, and red tape can prevent children from accessing the summer meals program in urban, suburban, and rural communities. Additionally, 30 percent of low-income children live in communities currently ineligible to operate open summer meals sites. Lack of access to proper nutrition during the summer months has negative consequences on children's health and education outcomes. The school and out-of-school based meal programs have a long history of bipartisan support for their role in providing children with the nutrition they need to grow up healthy and excel in school.

Proven solutions exist that would strengthen the summer meals program. These include streamlining out-of-school programs to reduce paperwork and make it easier for sites to operate; providing grocery credits to low-income families during the summer months; and, providing more options for community-based organizations to reach children with nutritious meals. These methods have demonstrated bipartisan support and would enhance the current site-based model of the summer meals program while providing additional models for reaching children in hard to reach communities. We encourage Congress to include these options in Child Nutrition Reauthorization.

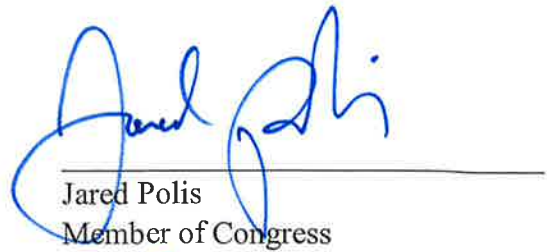
Thank you for your work on this issue. The summer meals program has not been fully updated by Congress since its creation in 1975. It is our hope that we are able to move forward on a strong Child Nutrition Reauthorization bill that leverages the strong bipartisan support for these improvements to the summer meals program and protects and strengthens all child nutrition programs. Hungry children across the country cannot wait another year.

Sincerely,


Rodney Davis
Member of Congress


Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress


Don Young
Member of Congress

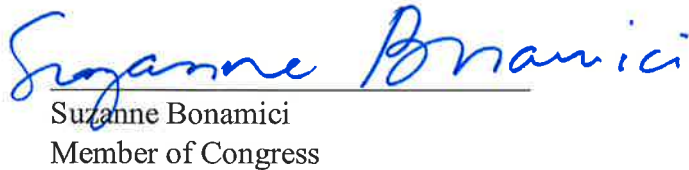

Jared Polis
Member of Congress


Brad Ashford
Member of Congress

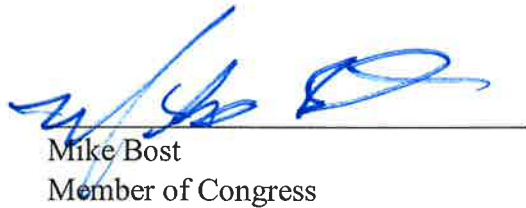

Bobby Rush
Member of Congress

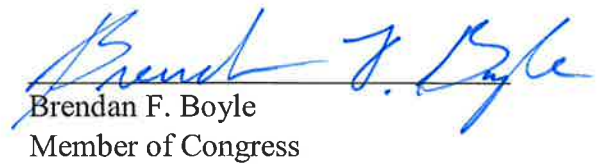

Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress

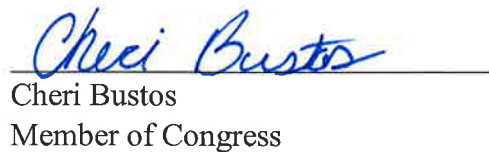

Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

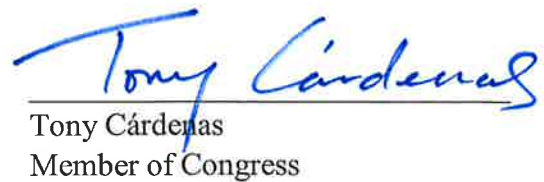

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress


Madeleine Bordallo
Member of Congress


Mike Bost
Member of Congress


Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress


Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress

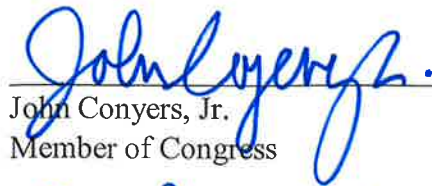

Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress


Carolyn Maloney
Member of Congress

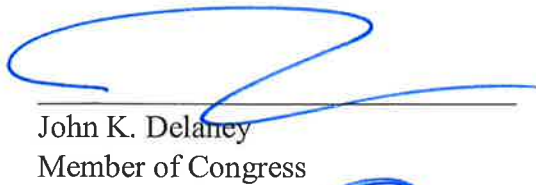

Matthew Cartwright
Member of Congress

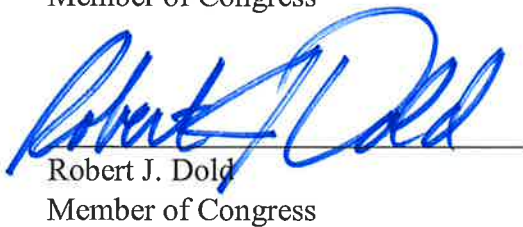

Kathy Castor
Member of Congress


Chris Gibson
Member of Congress



John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress

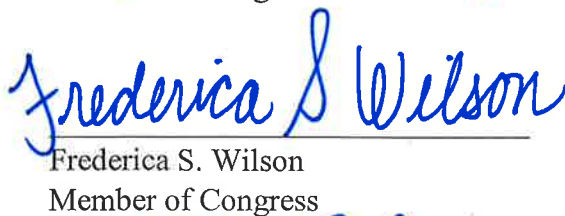

David Scott
Member of Congress



John K. Delaney
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Robert J. Dold
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Keith Ellison
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Elizabeth H. Esty
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Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress

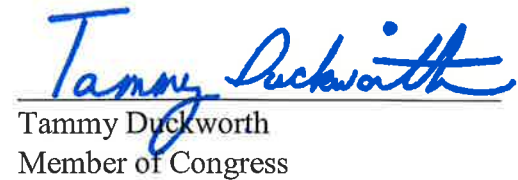

Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress


Alan Grayson
Member of Congress


Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

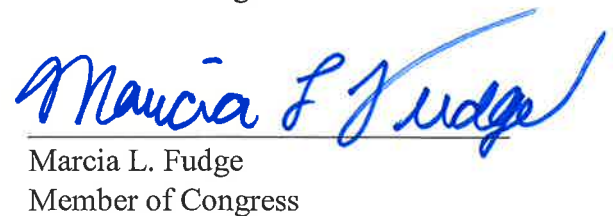

Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress


Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress

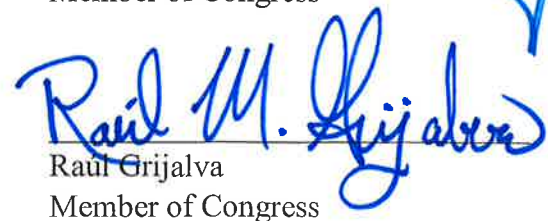

Tammy Duckworth
Member of Congress


Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress


Frank Lucas
Member of Congress


Marcia L. Fudge
Member of Congress


Gerry E. Connolly
Member of Congress


Raul Grijalva
Member of Congress



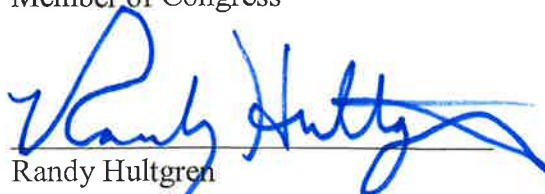
Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



Hank C. Johnson Jr.
Member of Congress



Richard Hanna
Member of Congress



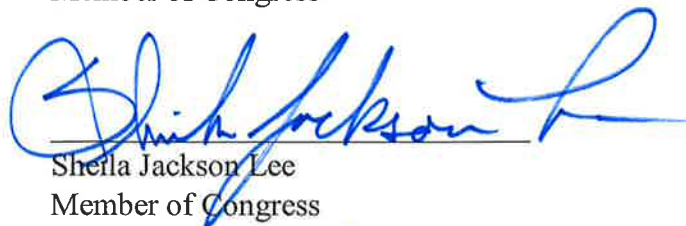
Randy Hultgren
Member of Congress



Michael M. Honda
Member of Congress



Jackie Walorski
Member of Congress



Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



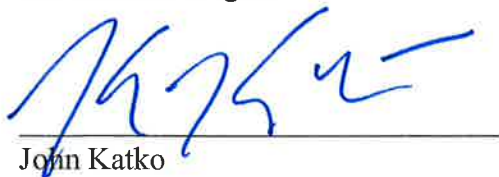
John Lewis
Member of Congress



Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



Katherine Clark
Member of Congress



John Katko
Member of Congress



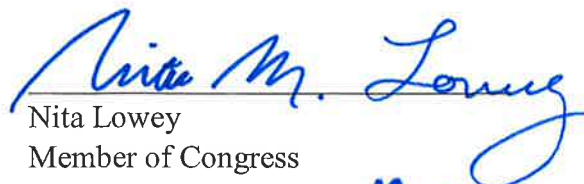
Dan Kildee
Member of Congress



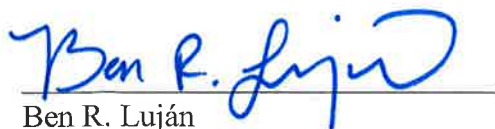
Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress



Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress



Nita Lowey
Member of Congress



Ben R. Luján
Member of Congress




Michelle Lujan Grisham
Member of Congress

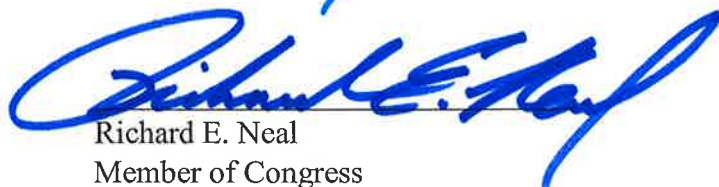


Mark Pocan
Member of Congress


Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

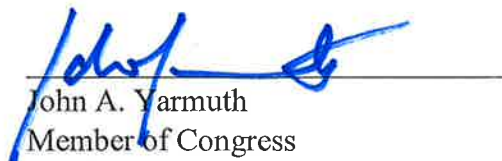

Mike Doyle
Member of Congress


Mike Quigley
Member of Congress


Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress


Bill Pascrell Jr.
Member of Congress

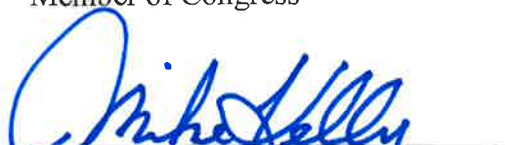

Stacey Plaskett
Member of Congress



John A. Yarmuth
Member of Congress


Cedric Richmond
Member of Congress



David Rouzer
Member of Congress

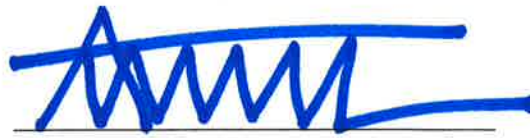

Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress


Mike Kelly
Member of Congress

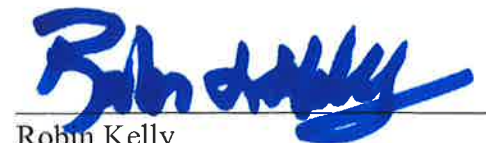

Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress


Frank Pallone Jr.
Member of Congress


Patrick Murphy
Member of Congress


Ted Poe
Member of Congress


David Price
Member of Congress


Robin Kelly
Member of Congress


Sam Graves
Member of Congress



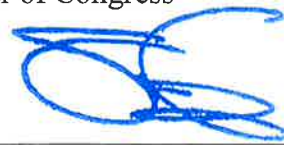
Sander M. Levin
Member of Congress



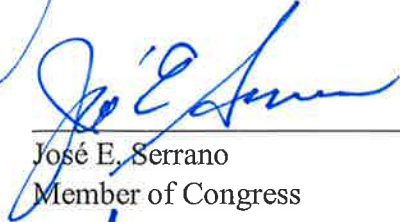
John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



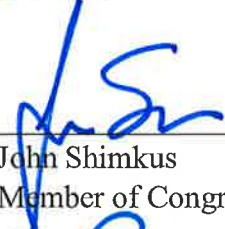
Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress



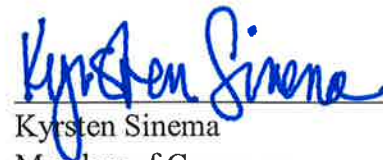
José E. Serrano
Member of Congress



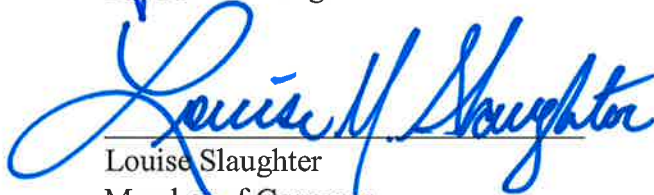
Terri Sewell
Member of Congress



John Shimkus
Member of Congress



Kyrsten Sinema
Member of Congress



Louise Slaughter
Member of Congress



Tim Murphy
Member of Congress



Tim Ryan
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress

CC: Congressman John Kline and Congressman Bobby Scott