

June XX, 2008

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chairwoman  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture,  
Rural Development, and Related Agencies  
2362-A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-6016

The Honorable Jack Kingston  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture,  
Rural Development, and Related Agencies  
2362-A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-6016

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Kingston,

As you are well aware, rising food prices in our country continue to strain not only household budgets, but jeopardize the effectiveness of our food assistance programs as well. The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) which provides monthly nutritious food packages has seen its cost rise from \$19.49 to \$21.91 per package. The program currently serves 473,473 low-income seniors, women, and children in 32 states, two tribal organizations, and the District of Columbia.

In March, XXX of our colleagues joined us in requesting that the CSFP be expanded to include five additional states and 116,000 individuals in states with existing programs. Our letter requested an appropriation of \$175 million to accomplish this task. However, in light of soaring food prices, it is now clear that more resources will be needed. The National CSFP Association estimates that the cost of expanding the program to meet these additional needs in FY 2009 is \$192 million.

The CSFP offers enrollees improved basic food security and protection against hunger. In FY 2007, 93 percent of recipients of the program were elderly individuals, all with income levels at or below \$13,273 per year. For home-bound seniors and those lacking access to transportation the CSFP has the added benefit of providing food box delivery directly to homes.

We understand that you face a difficult task in balancing a number of priorities within a limited budget, but we urge you to keep these individuals in mind as you begin consideration of the FY 2009 Agriculture Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

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Sander Levin  
Member of Congress

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Member of Congress