

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 26, 2010

The Honorable Herb Kohl
Chairman
Senate Appropriations,
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Dirksen 129
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sam Brownback
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations,
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Dirksen 190
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Kohl and Ranking Member Brownback,

We respectfully ask that you allocate \$176.8 million in the FY11 Agriculture Appropriations bill for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). This modest \$5.4 million increase is consistent with the President's proposed Fiscal Year 2011 budget. We appreciate having had the Committee's generous and ongoing support in the past, and are pleased to say at this time, the budget request provides adequate funding for the CSFP program in place today.

As you know, CSFP is a critical nutrition program that delivers USDA commodities primarily to seniors, and mothers and children. In this time of economic hardship, support for CSFP is more important than ever. It is often a program of last resort for seniors who qualify for no other form of nutrition assistance. This year, 96 percent of the participants are elderly individuals with an income at or below \$14,079. CSFP food packages are designed to supplement needed sources of nutrients typically lacking in participants' diets, including protein, iron, zinc, and vitamins B-6 and B-12. CSFP providers also have been very cost efficient: the typical food package has a retail value up to \$50 but costs the Federal government less than \$20 per participant package.

CSFP provides 600,000 food packages each month in 39 states, the District of Columbia, and 2 Indian Tribal Organizations. As a direct result of your action in FY10, seven states were added: Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Maine, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Utah.

In a recent study of CSFP, the Urban Institute found that:

"CSFP has charms worth considering in designing human service programs. The administrative simplicity and familiar and comfortable atmosphere of the program are clearly attractions to a population that needs assistance but may be reluctant to seek help in settings it perceives as bureaucratic, stigmatized, or unsympathetic. The fact that the foods distributed are highly valued is clearly another [benefit]."

USDA/Urban Institute Study 2008

All CSFP operators are working hard to use the additional caseload slots made available as a result of the FY10 appropriation. In the months to come, we understand that up to four additional states may seek USDA approval for new CSFP programs. We will certainly keep you

apprised of any additional developments that may have bearing on the funding level needed for FY 2011.

We appreciate your consideration of this important request and look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure that no American goes hungry.

Sincerely,

Debbie Stabenow Richard P. Lugar

Tom Harkin Sheldon Brown

Al Franken Allen DeBevoise

Carl Levin Jim Johnson

Dir. Anable Von Udo

Chris Schu Frank R. Lautenberg

Kent Conrad Maria Cantwell

Ron Wyden Bob Casey, Jr.

Rob W. Bennet Kirsten E. Gillibrand

Jeffrey A. Marbley
[Signature]

W. M. F. B. #

R. L. Sanders

Paul Bepler

Carl Seim

