

**Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515**

February 15, 2008

**Promote Nutrition for Seniors in Your District
Support the Commodity Supplemental Food Program**

DEADLINE: Friday, March 7th

Dear Colleague:

During these tough economic times, we need to have effective government programs that support families struggling to make ends meet. No one in our country should go without food. The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) is one such vital program that provides **monthly nutritious food packages to 473,473 low-income seniors, women and children in 32 states, two tribal organizations and the District of Columbia.** Please join me in urging the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee to provide increased funding for the CSFP so this program can continue and expand its critical work.

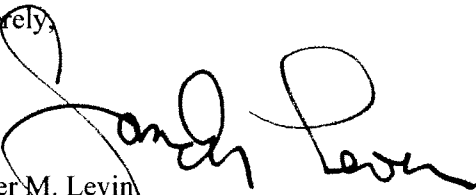
93 percent of all CSFP recipients are seniors with annual income levels at or below \$13,273 and many have no means of transportation. By providing for delivery of fresh food packages, the CSFP plays a crucial role in ensuring that even the homebound have their nutrition needs met. CSFP enrollees rely on the program for basic food security, and often as a supplement to a meager food stamp benefit.

The letter below urges the Chairwoman and Ranking Member to allocate \$175 million in the FY09 Agriculture Appropriations Act for the CSFP. This funding level would allow the program to **expand to five additional states and would help serve an additional 116,000 individuals in states with existing programs.**

The CSFP prevents hundreds of thousands of seniors, women and children from going hungry, yet the President's budget recommends eliminating it. Please join me in opposing this cut and supporting this valuable program.

The USDA budget summary, which includes the elimination of the CSFP, can be seen here: <http://www.obpa.usda.gov/budsum/fy09budsum.pdf>. If you would like to join me, please contact Alan Mlynek (alan.mlynek@mail.house.gov) in my office (5x4961).

Sincerely,



Sander M. Levin
Member of Congress

March XX, 2007

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Agriculture, Rural Development
And Related Agencies
Room 2362-A Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515-6016

The Honorable Jack Kingston
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Agriculture, Rural Development
and Related Agencies
Room 2362 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515-6016

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Kingston,

We respectfully ask that you allocate \$175 million in the FY09 Agriculture Appropriations Bill for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). The CSFP provides monthly nutritional aid packages to 473,473 low-income seniors, women and children. Unfortunately, the President's Budget again targeted the program for elimination.

The CSFP provides nutritious food boxes that are designed to meet the dietary needs of seniors, women, infants, and children in 32 states, two Indian Tribal Organizations and the District of Columbia. In FY07, 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.

As in the FY08 Administration budget proposal, this year's proposal would have current recipients enroll in a transitional food stamp program once the CSFP is eliminated. For these indigent recipients, food stamps vouchers are not an acceptable replacement to the program. The CSFP packages are often a supplement to one's food stamp benefit. Eliminating the program would endanger the health of home-bound individuals and would mean many seniors would see a monthly food benefit of only \$20. The CSFP food packages that enrollees currently receive have a retail value of approximately \$50.

Despite the Bush Administration's FY08 recommendation to terminate the program, Congress funded the CSFP at \$139.7 million. In order to continue and expand service to those challenged by hunger, we request that you fund this program at \$175 million, the amount requested by the National CSFP Association, in FY09. This funding level would allow the program to expand to five additional states and would serve an additional 116,000 individuals in states with existing CSFP programs.

The CSFP is not a luxury: rather it is a necessity to prevent hundreds of thousands of seniors, women and children from going hungry throughout the country. We urge you to keep these individuals in mind as you consider appropriations requests.

Sincerely,