



FIRST FOCUS

CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN

July 10, 2012

The Honorable Frank Lucas
United States House of Representatives
2311 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Lucas:

I am writing on behalf of the First Focus Campaign for Children (FFCC), regarding the upcoming U.S. House of Representatives Agriculture Committee markup of the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act (FARRM). FFCC is a bipartisan organization that advocates directly for legislative change in Congress to ensure that children and families are a priority in federal policy and budget decisions.

We are deeply disappointed in the proposed cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), as this program provides nutritious food to over 20 million children. With one in five American children going to bed at night not knowing whether they or a family member will go hungry the next day, we strongly oppose the more than \$16 billion in cuts to the program. Currently millions of families struggle to make ends meet and cuts to SNAP will only make it harder for families to afford a nutritious diet and will further increase the demand on charitable feeding operations.

In addition, we oppose the proposed changes to the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), as the current structure of the program ensures that low-income elementary students have access to a fresh fruit or vegetable snack at school. FFVP helps schools provide a healthy fresh fruit or vegetable snack to over 3 million low income children. It is imperative that this program continue to provide only fresh fruits and vegetables. FFVP is a great education tool as children learn about various fresh vegetables and fruits through the program. With our country facing both high amounts of childhood hunger and childhood obesity, it is important to protect the FFVP, which provides a healthy fresh fruit or vegetable snack to children without increasing daily calorie intakes.

Now more than ever, these nutrition programs are a critical resource for vulnerable families and children. These programs are effectively targeted to reach our nation's children and as millions of families struggle to make ends meet, we need to ensure that families have the resources, knowledge, and access to achieve an adequate, nutritious diet for their children. The First Focus Campaign for Children strongly urges Congress to reject cuts to the SNAP program and asks that Members of Congress work towards protecting and strengthening nutrition programs as the Farm Bill reauthorization moves forward.

Sincerely,

Bruce Lesley, President