

**H.R. 2297, WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON FOOD
AND NUTRITION**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
**SUBCOMMITTEE ON RULES AND
ORGANIZATION OF THE HOUSE**
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON RULES
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

MONDAY, MAY 18, 2009



Printed for the use of the Committee on Rules

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON : 2010

56-021

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
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CONTENTS

May 18, 2009

	Page
Opening Statements:	
Hon. James P. McGovern, a Representative in Congress from the State of Massachusetts and Chair of the Subcommittee on Rules and Organization	1
Hon. Pete Sessions, a Representative in Congress from the State of Texas and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Rules and Organization	3
Prepared statement	5
Hon. Michael Arcuri, a Representative in Congress from the State of New York	6
Hon. Virginia Foxx, a Representative in Congress from the State of North Carolina	6
Witness Testimony:	
Hon. Jo Ann Emerson, a Representative in Congress from the State of Missouri	7
Prepared statement	9
Reverend David Beckmann, President, Bread for the World	18
Prepared statement	19
Mr. Robert Egger, President, D.C. Central Kitchen	25
Prepared statement	28
Ms. Nicole R. Robinson, Director of Corporate Community Involvement, Kraft Foods	30
Prepared statement	31
Additional Materials Submitted for the Record:	
Curriculum Vitae and Truth in Testimony Forms for Witnesses Testifying Before the Committee (where applicable)	36
Letter from Ms. Vicki Escarra, President and CEO of Feeding America, to Representatives James McGovern and Jo Ann Emerson, dated May 9, 2009	44
Letter from Ms. Christine A. Poward, Executive Director of the Association of Nutrition Services Agencies, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 12, 2009	47
Letter from the Reverend Larry Snyder, President of the Catholic Charities USA, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 12, 2009	49
Letter from Ms. Margaret Saunders, President, and the Reverend Douglas A. Greenaway, Executive Director of the National WIC Association, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 12, 2009	51
Letter from Mr. Max Finberg, Director of the Alliance to End Hunger, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 13, 2009	53
Letter from Mr. Gary A. Davis, CEO of East Side Entrees, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 13, 2009	56
Letter from Ms. Karen Pearl, President and CEO of God's Love We Deliver, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 13, 2009	58

IV

	Page
Additional Materials Submitted for the Record—Continued	
Letter from Mr. Hadar Susskind, Vice President and Washington Director for the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 13, 2009	60
Letter from Mr. David Richart, Executive Director of Lifelong AIDS Alliance, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 13, 2009	63
Letter from Mr. Joel Berg, Executive Director of the New York City Coalition against Hunger, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 13, 2009	65
Letter from Mr. Kevin Winge, Executive Director for Open Arms of Minnesota, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 13, 2009	67
Letter from Ms. Deborah R. Hinde, President and CEO to Vital Bridges, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 13, 2009	69
Letter from Mr. Greg Lukeman, Executive Director of Food Outreach Inc., to Representative James McGovern, dated May 14, 2009	71
Letter from Mr. James D. Weill, President of Food Research and Action Center, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 14, 2009	73
Letter from Ms. Erin Pulling, Executive Director of Project Angel Heart, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 14, 2009	75
Letter from Ms. Ellen Parker, Executive Director of Project Bread—the Walk for Hunger, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 14, 2009	77
Letter from Ms. Pat Nicklin, Managing Director of Share Our Strength, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 14, 2009	79
Letter from Mr. Robert Greenstein, Executive Director of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 15, 2009	81
Letter from Mr. John T. Evers, Executive Director of the Food Bank Association of New York State, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 15, 2009	83
Letter from Mr. Clyde W. Fitzgerald, Jr., Executive Director of Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 15, 2009	85
Letter from Dr. Keith Schildt, President, and Mr. Bob Blancato, Executive Director, of the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP), to the Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee on Rules and Organization of the House, dated May 15, 2009	87
Letter from Mr. Bill Ayres, Co-Founder and Executive Director of World Hunger Year, Inc., to Mr. Keith L. Stern, Subcommittee Staff Director, dated May 15, 2009	90
Letter from Ms. Deborah Weinstein, Executive Director of the Coalition on Human Needs, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 18, 2009	92
Letter from Ms. Pamela Baily, President and CEO of Grocery Manufacturers Association, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 18, 2009	94
Letter from Dr. H. Eric Schokman, President of Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger, dated May 18, 2009	96
Letter from Mr. Roger Johnson, President of the National Farmers Union, to Representatives James McGovern and Jo Ann Emerson, dated May 18, 2009	98
Letter from Ms. Kelly D. Johnson, Vice President Government Affairs of Campbell Soup Company, to Representative James McGovern, dated May 21, 2009	100

	Page
Additional Materials Submitted for the Record—Continued	
Letter from Mr. Paul Downey, President of the California Nutrition Coalition, to the Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee on Rules and Organization of the House	103
Letter from Mr. Edward M. Cooney, Executive Director of the Congressional Hunger Center	106
Letter from the Honorable Dan Glickman, Former Secretary of Agriculture and Former Member of Congress from Kansas, to Representative James McGovern	108
The Washington Times Op-Ed by George McGovern and Bob Dole, entitled “Obesity Conference Call,” March 27, 2009	110

**ORIGINAL JURISDICTION HEARING ON H.R.
2297, WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON FOOD
AND NUTRITION**

MONDAY, MAY 18, 2009

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON RULES AND
ORGANIZATION OF THE HOUSE,
COMMITTEE ON RULES,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 3 p.m., in Room H-313, The Capitol, Hon. James P. McGovern [chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives McGovern, Arcuri, Sessions and Foxx.

OPENING STATEMENTS

Mr. MCGOVERN. The Subcommittee on Rules and Organization of the House will come to order.

Let me begin by welcoming everyone to this original jurisdiction hearing on H.R. 2297, calling for a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition.

I want to thank all of the witnesses for taking the time out of their busy schedule to take part in this hearing. I also want to thank members of this subcommittee, and specifically the Ranking Member Mr. Sessions, for working on and participating in this hearing.

To my colleagues of the subcommittee, please feel free to make some brief opening statements, if you like. Following any opening statements, we will hear from our first witness, the Honorable Jo Ann Emerson from Missouri. After her statement, we will proceed to questions and then go to the second panel.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS AND CHAIR OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON RULES AND ORGANIZATION

Many of you know that ending hunger is one of my passions. I have spoken about it numerous times in this committee and on the House floor, and I firmly believe that we have the food and the means to end hunger in America, but we haven't found the political will to do so.

While I believe that hunger is a political condition, it is not a partisan one. A hungry child does not think about Republican or Democratic politics, only about where their next meal will come

from. That is why, along with my friend and colleague Jo Ann Emerson, I introduced legislation calling for a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition.

The last, in fact the only time, a White House Conference on Hunger was held was in 1969 when President Richard Nixon convened a similar conference to address these issues. The result was a dramatic improvement in the Federal safety net program, food stamps, WIC and school meals.

No longer do we have the sunken eyes and swollen bellies that are still common in famine-plagued areas around the globe. Yet the fact is that hunger still exists in the United States. The face of hunger changed after that conference, yet 40 years later, according to the latest USDA data, more than 36 million people living in this country, the United States of America, still went hungry in 2007.

The rate of very low food security among children and seniors, USDA's way of saying the hungriest in this country, rose 60 percent and 26 percent respectively over the previous year. This means there were over 690,000 very hungry kids in America in 2007 and over 780,000 very hungry seniors. That simply is unconscionable in 2009.

The Federal anti-hunger safety net is good, but is an imperfect system. Food stamps, now called SNAP, helps families put food on the table. The improvements included in the farm bill and recovery package greatly improved the purchasing power of food stamps, yet that benefit is still inadequate for a variety of reasons. School meals are provided, yet not every child who needs a meal gets one, nor are these meals as nutritious as they should be. And while hunger doesn't take a summer break, there are millions of kids who receive a free meal during the school year, but don't have access to a meal during the summer.

The Federal safety net is just that, a safety net. The Federal programs are critical, but for too long we have relied too heavily on food banks and food pantries. The problems facing these organizations are twofold: an increasingly hungrier population, more middle-income families are relying on help from these groups than in recent years, and fewer monetary and food donations are coming in. This is attributable to a faltering economy and the resulting increase in demand.

There is clearly a connection between hunger, the availability of good, nutritious food and the livelihoods of the American people. The school lunch program began as a way to properly feed our Nation's children so they would be ready to fight in World War II. We created the WIC program in order to help low-income pregnant mothers and infants receive proper nutrition in order to physically and mentally develop and grow.

We know that hunger has direct impacts on the education and health of our children. The same is true with our seniors. It is critical that senior citizens, many who live on fixed income, receive proper nutrition. Without good, healthy food, seniors will face a myriad of health problems that are easily preventable. A lack of nutritious food will also exacerbate existing medical conditions.

That brings us back to the need for Presidential leadership. For too long we have relied on an incomplete Federal and private response to the issue of hunger in this country. What we need is a

new approach to the problem, someone who will not only highlight to the country that there are still hungry people in America, but someone who will ask the right questions: Who are the hungry; who is at risk of hunger in the near future; is there a safety net doing the job; where are the gaps in the safety net; how nutritious is the available food; who is falling through the cracks; and simply, how do we end hunger in America? How is the obesity crisis connected to food security? How do we increase people's purchasing power so they can afford to buy nutritious food? How do we get beyond simply giving people food? How do we make food banks and food pantries, some of these safety net programs, obsolete?

As I said at the beginning of this year, hunger is a political, not a partisan, connection. I believe that President Bush should have convened this conference when he was in office, and now I believe that President Obama should do it.

Now I will recognize our subcommittee Ranking Member Mr. Sessions, if he has any opening remarks, and anybody else on the committee.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Sessions.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. PETE SESSIONS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS AND RANKING MEMBER OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON RULES AND ORGANIZATION

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, thank you so very much.

Mr. Chairman, just yesterday at church I was reminded that my church, at the time of Katrina, provided 1 million pounds of food, 1 million man hours and \$1 million to help out Katrina victims when they came to Dallas, Texas. We did the things we felt like needed to be done because the need existed there.

My church also, on a regular basis, participates with an organization called Habitat for Humanity, and while this has very little to do with food, it has a lot to do with housing. I think they go together. My church has a program called Carpenters for Christ, and we are number three in the world as an organization in providing homes in Dallas, Texas.

So I believe that charity does begin at home. I believe the story we need to tell is a story that can be told all across this country and individual communities, with the thought and the hope that individual communities step up and do what they should do.

Mr. Chairman, I will ask unanimous consent for a statement of mine to be placed in the record.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Without objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. With that said, I will consume just a few minutes to give you my brief thoughts.

I would like to thank Chairman McGovern for holding this hearing today. I would also like to thank Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson, a dear friend of mine, for being on this first panel.

Thanks as well to Robert Egger, president of the D.C. Central Kitchen; David Beckmann from Bread for the World; Nicole Robinson with Kraft Foods Global, for testifying on this important issue of food and nutrition.

In 2007, the U.S. Department of Agriculture reported that 36.2 million people in the United States were living in households con-

sidered to be food insecure. Texas, my home State, is one of the highest food-insecure States in the Nation, and without the appropriate nutrients, there could be harmful effects to learning, development, productivity, physical and psychological health, and family life.

Generally, Americans suffer from a less severe form of malnutrition than those around the globe. This is due to the generosity of the American public. American companies provide a proactive role in fighting hunger through charitable donations, contributions, trade policies and government safety net programs.

One example is the Communities Foundation of Texas, a Dallas-based organization, and they have been a partner with donors for raising the quality of life in my community for over 50 years. Since 1953, more than \$1 billion in grants have been made by the Dallas-based foundation. Cumulative for the fiscal year 2007 and fiscal year 2008 year, they have awarded \$245,155 in grants directly to food banks and \$284,964 in grants to support other hunger-relief programs.

On a national level, Americans and our Nation's companies are assisting to end hunger and malnutrition by joining organizations like Feeding America. Today we have the pleasure of hearing from the Nicole Robinson from Kraft Foods Global, one of the manufacturing partners for this organization.

Feeding America, the Nation's leading domestic hunger-relief charity, assists through a nationwide network of member food banks fighting to end hunger. They provide food assistance to more than 25 million low-income people in the United States, supplying more than 200 food banks throughout the 50 States, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Over 2 billion pounds of food and grocery products are donated annually. I think that is a pretty good way to help out.

ConAgra Foods, which has contributed to Feeding America for over 15 years, also has a foundation that is leading the charge to raise awareness of the 12 million children that go hungry, and pursue sustained solutions to end child hunger. The foundation is committed to building a community of people who are passionate about ensuring access to the food and facts that they need to eat nutritiously, live balanced lifestyles, and excel in school and life.

Providing fair trade policies not only assists with the food and hunger issues plaguing America today, but also reaches those outside the United States that suffer from malnutrition and starvation. I appreciate the president of Bread for the World, David Beckmann, for testifying in front of us today, and I hope he discusses some of the trade and subsidy policies that assist in the goal of ending global hunger and any policies that inhibit that goal.

With charitable donations from American businesses and individuals, fair trade opportunities, education and awareness and government safety nets, I am certain that we can ensure that every American has the appropriate nutrients for a healthy life.

I do want to thank you again, Mr. Chairman, not only for holding this important hearing, but I look forward to working with you and my other colleagues who are here today at this very important hearing. I want to thank each of those that are here today with the thought that we can do better.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sessions follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. PETE SESSIONS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS
FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Good afternoon. I would like to thank Chairman McGovern for holding this hearing. I would also like to thank Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson and our second panel of expert witnesses for testifying here today on the extremely important issue of food and nutrition.

In 2007, the U.S. Department of Agriculture reported that 36.2 million people in the United States were living in households considered to be food insecure. Of these 36.2 million about 12 million were children. Texas is one of the highest food insecurity states in America. Malnutrition has devastating effects for both the mental and physical capacity of children who receive inadequate nutrition. Without the appropriate nutrients, there could be harmful effects to learning, development, productivity, physical and psychological health and family life.

Generally, Americans suffer from a less severe form of malnutrition than those around the globe. This is due to the generosity of the American public, American companies that provide a proactive role in fighting hunger, trade policies and government safety net programs. A good example in my district is Dean Foods, a Dallas based company, which in 2006 provided a \$1.25 million gift to Children's Hospital in Dallas to create the Dean Foods L.E.A.N Families Program. This is a 12-week program administered through the hospital's nutrition department that provides patients and their families intense weight-management therapy while encouraging healthy habits throughout life.

Our nation's grocery manufacturers are assisting to ensure their customers live healthier lives by providing tools to help make better food choices and offering a variety of affordable, nutritious products. Safeway has created FoodFlex, a free online nutritional tool that allows Safeway shoppers to receive a nutritional snapshot of their grocery purchases, benchmark their nutritional performance against USDA guidelines, identify food alternatives and create a personalized shopping list to achieve their nutritional goals.

The Communities Foundation of Texas (CFT), another Dallas based organization, has been a partner with donors for raising the quality of life in my community for over 50 years. Since 1953, more than \$1 billion in grants have been made by the Dallas-based foundation. It has grown along with North Texas to become one of the largest community foundations in the nation. Cumulatively, for the FY07 and FY08, CFT awarded \$245,155 in grants directly to food banks and \$284,964 in grants to support other hunger relief programs.

On a national level Americans and our nation's companies are assisting to end hunger and malnutrition by joining organizations like *Feeding America*. Today, we have the pleasure of hearing from Nicole Robinson from Kraft Foods Global, one of the manufacturing partners for this organization. *Feeding America*, the nation's leading domestic hunger-relief charity, assists through a nationwide network of member food banks fighting to end hunger. They provide food assistance to more than 25 million low-income people in the U.S., supplying more than 200 food banks throughout the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Over 2 billion pounds of food and grocery products are donated annually.

General Mills is another private company that has directed product donations to *Feeding America* for over 30 years. General Mills is consistently ranked among the top ten contributors of food in the United States. During fiscal 2008, General Mills donated over \$18 million in products to *Feeding America*. Organizations like this would not exist without the generous donations and contributions from private business.

ConAgra Foods, which has contributed to *Feeding America* for over 15 years, also has a Foundation that is leading the charge to raise awareness of these 12 million children in food insecure households and pursue sustainable solutions to end child hunger. The ConAgra Foods Foundation is committed to building a community of people who are passionate about ensuring that America's children have access to the food and facts they need to eat nutritiously, live balanced lifestyles, and excel in school and life. While one in every eight children in America doesn't know where their next meal will come from, we also have to recognize that one in every five children are obese. We need to ensure that not only do our children have food, but they get the appropriate nutrients to live long and healthy lives.

Providing fair trade policies not only assists with the food and hunger issues plaguing Americans today, but also reaches those outside the U.S. who suffer from malnutrition and starvation. I appreciate the President of Bread for the World, David Beckmann, for testifying in front of us today, and I hope he discusses some

of the current trade and subsidy policies that assist in the goal of ending hunger and any policies that inhibit that goal.

I recognize the importance of providing quality nutrients to all Americans, whether they are children, adults or seniors. America has the necessary resources to ensure that no one goes hungry. Through charitable giving, the Giving USA Foundation estimated in 2008 that \$29.64 billion was donated for "human services." While this does not only represent food and nutrition, it is a strong testament that this is a generous nation that wants to ensure a successful future for all Americans. It is extremely important that Congress does everything in its power to protect and encourage charitable giving from individuals and companies.

With charitable donations from American businesses and individuals, fair trade opportunities and government safety nets, I am certain that we can ensure that every American has the appropriate nutrients for a healthy life.

I want to thank Chairman McGovern again for holding this important hearing and I look forward to working with him and all my colleagues on the Rules Committee to ensure that no American goes hungry. Thank you.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I thank the gentleman for his comments.
We are joined by Mr. Arcuri and Dr. Foxx.
Mr. Arcuri.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MICHAEL ARCURI, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Mr. ARCURI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your work on hunger issues. I commend you for your tireless work on this critically important issue.

Skyrocketing health care and food costs combined with rising unemployment cause many Americans to go without food. That is an absolutely unacceptable situation in the most prosperous country in the world. In my district in upstate New York, unemployment numbers are alarming. There are two counties where they actually exceed 10 percent and more, and more families are struggling to make ends meet.

I commend you, Chairman McGovern, for your working to address hunger issues through H.R. 2297. A White House Conference on Food and Nutrition would be an invaluable tool in the fight against hunger in this country. I think the last one was held about 40 years ago—

Mr. MCGOVERN. 1969.

Mr. ARCURI [continuing]. When President Nixon was in the White House. I think that is far too long. I think it is high time that we do it again. Certainly we can learn from some of the things that we did right and certainly some of the things we did wrong, but I think it is high time we do that.

I look forward to hearing from the witnesses today who have been on the front line of hunger issues.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. VIRGINIA FOXX, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA

Mr. MCGOVERN. Dr. Foxx.

Dr. FOXX. I will make my comments very brief, but I, too, would commend you and Congresswoman Emerson for your passion for this and commitment to this issue, and would tell you that my church, my community, all communities in my district, also work on food drives and help the food pantries in our area and have done a lot when crisis times have come in our area. I look forward to the hearing, and I want to thank all of the folks here today.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Thank you very much.

I am very proud to introduce our first witness, the Honorable Jo Ann Emerson of Missouri, who has been a powerful advocate for all initiatives to end hunger.

As I said at the beginning, this is not a partisan issue. Hunger knows no politics. But Congresswoman Emerson has been out there on the front line fighting to raise awareness and to get things done, and she has been pretty successful over the years.

I am happy she is here, and I am honored she is a cosponsor on this bill. I now yield to the Honorable Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson.

WITNESS TESTIMONY

STATEMENT OF HON. JO ANN EMERSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Mrs. EMERSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee. I really appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today and discuss the proposed White House Food and Nutrition Conference and H.R. 2297. Let me also thank the Chairman for the tremendous leadership he has shown on this issue for so many years. I feel certain that one of these days soon we will solve this crisis.

I was very pleased to hear Mr. Sessions talk about the incredible generosity of companies like Kraft Foods and the private sector, whether it is Wal-Mart or a lot of different food service organizations, who give a lot of donations for our food banks and the like, and, working together with the faith-based organizations like Bread for the World and Feeding America and others, have made an enormous difference, as have our safety nets provided by the government through SNAP, through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and the like.

But it is still a cold, hard fact that in spite of all of that, in spite of the generosity, that hunger still exists in America to the numbers that both you, Chairman McGovern, and Mr. Sessions indicated: 36.2 million Americans live in food-insecure households—this is back in 2007, which are probably the most recent numbers—23.8 million of whom were adults and 12.4 million who were children. And the percent of households who experience hunger and the number who are forced to make really, really difficult choices between necessities to avoid hunger had all increased over the past decade, even before unemployment brought about the current economic crisis.

I will tell you that in my home district of 28 counties, the 20th poorest congressional district in America, we have more food banks with little or no food to give out because of this added stress with the newly unemployed looking for every opportunity to be able to feed their children. We have in Missouri just incredible social workers who have been very active, and we have one of the highest food stamp participation rates in the country. But yet at the same time, we continue to rank near the bottom in terms of food security and hungry individuals.

So, clearly, in spite of all of this, we are not getting the job done, and that is why it is so critically important to figure it out, and

that is why it is so important to have this White House Food and Nutrition Conference that we are requesting in H.R. 2297.

The Obama administration has also requested \$5 million for Hunger-Free Community grants in the fiscal year 2010 Department of Agriculture budget. These grants will be used to support the development and implementation of local strategies to fight hunger. I also think this request recognizes the need for increased organization and a fuller strategy at the local level to make sure we are using all the tools available to fight hunger, and we are also using them efficiently, because we have so many people, we have a certain amount of resources, and it is obviously incumbent upon us to find efficiencies so we can feed more people.

Last week we had Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack in our Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, and I asked him whether there was a comprehensive, government-wide strategy to combat hunger. His answer actually led me to believe that there was not one.

But just like the Hunger-Free Community grants can help develop local strategies, I just feel very strongly that this White House Food and Nutrition Conference that we call for in H.R. 2297 can help us provide a strategy, a roadmap, if you will, to help us reduce hunger rates in the United States.

Considering that we are the richest country in the world, it is a public embarrassment that we would not be able to feed every single person or find a means by which every single person in this country would be fed three decent meals a day.

So, in essence, what our bill does is to require the President of the United States to call a conference on food and nutrition, and I think that such a conference holds great potential, and it would serve several purposes, each of which will fill an important need. I think that it will help us identify viable solutions to end hunger; it will allow us to review current programs and activities, identify what has worked and what hasn't, and there are a lot; and importantly, it would also, I think, increase the coordination between government agencies and entities. We all know sometimes that the right hand doesn't always talk to the left hand within the government.

You know, interestingly, too, Mr. Chairman, last week while we were doing some research, my staff was doing some research, on domestic child hunger, Justin did a little Google search, and one of the first articles to appear was from the Tehran Times in Iran. I am personally less concerned that the Iranian spin machine is highlighting hunger in the U.S., but I will tell you the fact that that was one of the first hits we made, the fact that more newspapers and media outlets in this country are not focusing on hunger, is a shame. If they are looking for news stories, this is one that is absolutely critical.

So, I am hopeful that this conference will actually move hunger closer to the forefront of the national agenda and hopefully produce positive results so that we perhaps don't have the need for these types of news stories.

Ultimately, however, the most important message that should be taken from H.R. 2297 is its first finding, as you said, Chairman McGovern: Hunger and undernutrition are political conditions that

can be solved. Hunger knows no partisanship. The quicker that Congress and the administration fully accept this statement and the responsibility that accompanies it, the quicker we can have an America where no child suffers from hunger, where no student must suppress hunger pains to study, where no adult must sacrifice for their child, and no senior must choose between food and medicine.

So, thank you all for your time. I urge your support for H.R. 2297. I am happy to answer any questions you might have.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Thank you very much for being here.

[The prepared statement of Mrs. Emerson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JO ANN EMERSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS
FROM THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and discuss the proposed White House Food and Nutrition Conference in H.R. 2297. I appreciate the leadership being shown by the Chairman and this committee on an issue that is near and dear to my heart—hunger.

It is a cold fact of life in America that hunger exists. In 2007, 36.2 million Americans lived in food insecure households, 23.8 million adults and 12.4 million children. The percent of households who experience hunger and the number who are forced to make difficult choices between necessities to avoid hunger had all increased over the past decade even before the rise in unemployment brought about by the current economic crisis. In Missouri, while we have very able and active social workers and one of the highest participation rates among food stamp eligible individuals, we continue to rank near the bottom in terms of food security and hungry individuals. Clearly, what we are doing is not solving the problem.

The Obama Administration has requested \$5 million for Hunger-Free Community Grants in the FY2010 Department of Agriculture budget. These grants can be used to support the development and implementation of local strategies to fight hunger. This request, I believe, recognizes the need for increased organization and a fuller strategy on the local level to ensure that all the tools available to fight hunger are being used, and used efficiently. Last week I had the opportunity to ask the Secretary of Agriculture during an Agriculture Appropriations hearing if there was a comprehensive government-wide strategy to combat hunger. His answer led me to strongly believe one does not exist. Just like the Hunger-Free Communities Grants can help develop local strategies, the White House Food and Nutrition Conference called for in H.R. 2297 can help provide a strategy to begin reducing hunger rates in the United States.

H.R. 2297 would require the President of the United States to call a conference on food and nutrition. Such a conference holds great potential and would serve several purposes, each of which filling an important need. It has the potential to spur the identification of viable solutions to end hunger; to review current programs and activities, identifying what has worked and what hasn't; and, importantly, the conference should increase coordination between government entities.

Mr. Chairman, last week while researching domestic child hunger, my staff started with a simple search of Google News, and one of the first articles to appear was from the Tehran Times in Iran. Personally, I am less concerned that the Iranian spin machine is highlighting hunger in the U.S. and more concerned that fewer American papers have focused on it. This conference will move hunger closer to the forefront of the national agenda and, hopefully, produce positive results so we do not have news stories like these at all.

Ultimately, however, the most important message that should be taken from H.R. 2297 is its first finding: hunger and undernutrition are political conditions that can be solved. The quicker Congress and the Administration fully accept this statement, and the responsibility that accompanies it, the quicker we can have an America where no child suffers from hunger, where no student must suppress hunger pains to study, where no adult must sacrifice for their child and no senior must choose between food and medicine.

Thank you for your time today, and I urge your support for H.R. 2297.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I feel like when I am questioning you, I am kind of questioning myself.

Mrs. EMERSON. Then I guess you don't need to ask me any questions.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I want to make clear here that people sometimes will say, oh, another conference, another summit. Why do we have so many summits and conferences? Does it really change anything? Well, some don't, and some do. There is no argument that the conference that was held in 1969 on this issue raised awareness and resulted in action. So that is an example of something that was achieved from a conference at the White House.

Our point, I think, of wanting this to happen is not just to have another reason to get together and talk about this issue, but it is to get everybody who is working on this issue in the same room and help coordinate one comprehensive plan so we all know what we are doing, we all take our assignments and can implement them.

As you pointed out in your statement, the issue of hunger is addressed by multiple agencies, as it is by multiple committees. Food stamps, or SNAP, is the Agriculture Committee and USDA. School lunches, that is Education and Labor and USDA, but also impact the Department of Education. There are programs at DOD. There are numerous various health departments and agencies that have had their fingers in the hunger issue in some way or somehow, but they don't get together on a weekly basis and talk. So you have duplication or triplication or quadruplication, if that is a word, and in some cases you have all areas of the population that fall through the cracks because it is not coordinated properly.

So I think having the opportunity to get everybody in government who is working on this in the room, and then people in the nonprofit sector and in the private sector who are working on this in a room, and let us figure out how we can pool our resources more effectively and more efficiently and end hunger, because I think one of the first issues is making sure that everybody has enough to eat, and that the food they eat is actually nutritious, because that results in other problems. But the second part of the conversation needs to be how do we move beyond that so populations are not relying on the good will of churches or food banks or even government programs? How do we increase people's purchasing power so they can become more independent and not have to rely on charity or on the safety net?

I think that is the issue that I want to be clear on, that this is not just about a conference to talk about things, it is not just a conference to figure out how to provide and strengthen the safety net, it would even go beyond that. And I think that you agree with me.

Mrs. EMERSON. I do agree with you. One of the things that is very frustrating—well, here is a perfect example. At the Centers for Disease Control, not that they specifically have anything to do with hunger, I am just going to use it as an example, there are certain diseases, certain different—whether it is breast cancer or whether it is cerebral palsy—actually they don't do this for CP, it is something they should. They actually do the surveillance so, you know, every single program in every single city, every single doctor who has expertise in this particular disease and all of the latest research, all you do is click and find it. We do not have that information.

So in the State of Missouri, for example, we have Bread for the World, we have all of these organizations, and we have a SNAP program, and we have CFSP. We have lots of things. We have a Boot Heel food bank. We have a St. Louis food bank. They sort of work together peripherally, but not really. So a lot of product might be going one place, and, as you say, nothing is going somewhere else, and it is very disorganized.

So if this could be one time that we actually get it all out there, organize it, I do think it would be much more efficient, and it may end up at the end of the day costing the taxpayers less money if we can simply be efficient. But when the right hand and left hand don't know what they are doing, and somebody in the Ag Department is working on the issue, or somebody at the Department of Education or Labor is working on the issue, I can assure you, they are not talking or coordinating their efforts. That, to me, is just a waste.

Mr. MCGOVERN. That is why I think we need to suggest to Secretary Vilsack that it is important that there be this kind of coordinated strategy, because it won't be solved just in the Department of Agriculture.

President Obama made a pledge he wants to end childhood hunger by 2015. That is a big task.

Mrs. EMERSON. It is a big task, but I think it is definitely doable if we are organized about it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. But it is not going to just happen at the Department of Agriculture; it is going to need more than just the Department of Agriculture.

Just one final thing, and that is I think people also need to appreciate the link between hunger and bad health. We are talking about taking on health care reform, and the big issue is how do you control health care costs? One of the best ways to control health care costs is not get sick and not have people end up with chronic diseases that will plague them for the rest of their lives.

I toured the Boston Medical Center not too long ago. They serve an underserved community, a very low-income community. And the chief pediatrician there told me when kids come into the emergency room with strep throat or the croup or with something, that normally you would just give them medicine and tell them to go home.

Kids who are hungry, kids who are food insecure end up staying in the hospital for a day or two or more. The costs—forget the moral implication of wanting to feed people—the costs associated with that are phenomenal. Even the tie-in between food insecurity and obesity, families that can't afford nutritious food want to try to keep their kids just healthy, if not quiet during the week, you end up buying stuff that is not good for you. So we see this linkage, you know, which a lot of people have a tough time connecting the dots here, but between food insecurity, bad nutrition and obesity.

How many young kids who are obese will end up with diabetes or will end up with high blood pressure or ultimately heart disease, chronic conditions that will plague them for the rest of their lives? Again, if you want to talk about controlling health care costs, we can control those costs much more effectively if we just make sure that these kids have good, nutritious food. And for all the discussion going on in the health care debate right now, a lot more needs

to be dedicated to what we are talking about here, food nutrition as well as exercise.

It is incredibly important to make sure that people can afford nutritious food; and even in school lunches that we are giving kids, that we are giving nutritious foods. I have been to school lunch programs that are phenomenal, where kids are given choices, where there are salads, and there are healthy options. And kids normally would like to take those options. I have been to school feeding programs that are awful, where the choices are all bad. I am going to tell you, you know, we need to kind of get back to basics here and focus on some of these issues.

Mrs. EMERSON. I agree.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Sessions.

Mr. SESSIONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Jo Ann, I will admit I have not sat in on one of your agriculture meetings in a long, long time, but I do know that there is a discussion on a regular basis about exactly what we are talking about, and I hope—without asking any questions, I hope what will happen in this conference, too, is we really look at the rules and regulations related to subsidies and the other things we do to encourage or discourage food from being grown.

Mrs. EMERSON. Okay. I understand what you are saying.

Mr. SESSIONS. That is a whole other topic. That is not what I am trying to say. You know more about the correlation and relationships than we do, and I think you would argue with me if we want to argue, and I am not trying to do that. There is enough food; it is just where it goes, and I don't know the facts of that.

Mrs. EMERSON. Well, technically there should be enough food. But keep in mind that there always needs to be a level playing field when you are competing in trade matters, as you well know, if you want to discuss the subsidy issue, which I know you don't. However, there is enough food. There is enough food on the one hand, but on the other hand, we have programs like the SNAP program or the food stamp program. But keep in mind the majority of recipients of food stamps are working Americans. They are not nonworking Americans.

And then you have the TANF program, and that is for the assistance to needy families. I am pleased they are finally changing the menu on that, because, as Jim was saying, the choices were all very high carbs, in my opinion very unhealthy in many instances, but an absolutely critical program.

I hope we are able to get this coordination, and we will be able to pass this bill out of the House simply because I think at the end of the day, we will be able to solve the problem of hunger in this country.

I did a mission trip down to Nicaragua, to rural Nicaragua, a couple of years ago, and the worst of the poverty in my district was nothing compared to what I saw there, where people really literally had nothing and lived in a house that was made out of black garbage bags. But, nonetheless, it still troubles me that we would have 12 million-plus children in this country who have no food, who go hungry, or who are hungry every day, and so many millions of adults.

The churches have done so much, and the private companies have done so much, but we are still not reaching everybody. Hopefully we can figure out who those people are that we are not reaching through a conference like this.

Mr. SESSIONS. That would be the second point that I really want to debate, other than say with you I support this bill and hope this happens, but that we look at what really works and try to fill in the gaps where it is not working as opposed to where it does work, so don't overlay certain areas. You would be the first one to say to me, Pete, thanks a lot. But even with the 1 million pounds or \$1 million or 1 million volunteer hours, even in that area there are still some gaps. Yet that we recognize. I am talking about where there is success, I hope you will let the success continue.

Mrs. EMERSON. Oh, no. Listen, we have a lot of success. There are a lot of issues in rural, because access is just difficult in rural America, and you don't have the ability to get to a grocery store where you can get really good choices. Sometimes you have got like a little 7/Eleven or Quick Shop place where it costs a dollar, or it was 99 cents at Quick Shop for one banana at my Quick Shop I was at the other day. So that is too expensive.

Anyway, hopefully we will come up with some good strategies that help to solve this problem.

Mr. SESSIONS. Then the last point I would like to make, I hope that there is some bit of work that a dietician would do; in other words, when you come in with a food stamp purchase, that you would understand that banana, even at \$1, is more worth it than maybe something else for a dollar. I am not trying to engage in any argument.

Mrs. EMERSON. No, I appreciate your support of this bill. Keep in mind that the average food stamp recipient gets \$3 a day. I did a food stamp challenge for a week. I was out to prove that you could eat nutritiously. But because it was my husband and me, I actually had a tiny bit more money to spend than just on myself. And I would say we ate 50 percent nutritious. I could buy one big iceberg lettuce that I chopped up and tried to expand as much as I could. And I bought one tomato, and I bought a cucumber, and I bought a small onion, and I bought a pack of chicken that was on sale.

Jim and I did this up at Safeway with coupons. It took me 2 hours. I had \$33 to spend for 1 week. My husband was only doing it for 4 days, and I was doing it for a week. I had \$33 to spend, and it took us 2 hours to shop because I kept having to put things back.

Keep in mind, most people don't have—if you are working in a factory, you don't necessarily have that kind of time. At least I had the Safeway to go to. Out in some of my areas, we don't have grocery stores like that. So one banana for \$1, that is one of my meals for the whole day.

But I think we have an opportunity here to really do good things so that perhaps we will be less reliant on the need for food stamps to supplement our other food budget that we have personally.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I lived on that food stamp budget along with her. I relied mostly on lentils. I used to like them. I don't like them anymore.

Mr. SESSIONS. That is a Doc Hastings-made product.

Mrs. EMERSON. I love lentils, so I gave Jim some of my chicken salad I made and took some of his lentils.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Also one other point. Some people said food stamps is a supplement, and it is supposed to be. But in this economy, again, with fuel prices what they were and are, and what the cost of living is in general, food stamp budgets turn out not to be kind of a supplement to their income, it becomes basically it.

The other thing I have noticed is when you go to grocery stores, the lousier the food is, the cheaper it is. The better and more nutritious the food is, the more expensive it is.

As Jo Ann mentioned, in some of these rural areas, we have those little Quick Marts. Some people can't get to a bigger supermarket. The same thing in the urban areas, too. We have a lot of people who don't have transportation, a lot of elderly people who have to rely on those little corner stores where everything is inflated because they are small. I am glad the stores exist, but the reality is that if you are on a fixed income, and you don't have much money, and you are relying on this food stamp benefit to basically get you through, you have some really lousy choices.

But hopefully if we could all get in a room together, and I invite the grocers in, too, how do we work together to get this thing solved, because we all can put something into this, and then maybe we might get this done. The frustration has been for me is there is no plan.

If you ask anybody in government what is the plan to end hunger in America, there is not one. We are going to increase food stamps. Fine. That is not a plan to end hunger. Or we are going to look at the nutrition of a school lunch program. We need to do that. That doesn't end hunger. We are going to expand charitable giving. That is great. It doesn't end the problem. I think connecting this all together and saying, okay, how do we pool our resources to do it?

Mr. Arcuri.

Mr. ARCURI. Thank you so much, Mrs. Emerson.

Just an observation that I had. I live in a city, a small city, and there is a neighboring city that is very large, but we are all in the same region, and there are a lot of very, very small communities.

What I have seen is as the community food banks strive to get more food, the big cities tend to reach out into the entire areas and take food from stores that normally will give it, and then it leaves the smaller communities more hard pressed to get the donations for the food banks. So in my smaller cities, they are constantly complaining because the nearby city that is much larger has a bigger staff and is better able to get the food. We see the smaller the community, the harder it is for the food banks to get their food.

Have you noticed that?

Mrs. EMERSON. Exactly. Exactly. The way the infrastructure of our system works, I guess is a better way of putting it, let us say the biggest donation of food would go to St. Louis, and then it spreads out, because there is so much demand there. It depends on whether you are getting the donations from some of the stores or not. We are fortunate to have many Wal-Marts. So even though the types of foods are perhaps changing a little bit from what they used

to be, we are having fewer items down my way, which is in south-east and south central Missouri, so then you have to pull from other directions.

The Boot Heel food bank, which is a central repository for several of my counties, we have had some real challenges just being able to get enough donations to make an adequate food basket. You try to balance it out. Where we have had a lot of trouble is with meats particularly. Sometimes you can get the mac and cheese, but mac and cheese isn't good for you anyway. It is going to help somebody stay full.

I don't know, but I think by having a discussion at a national level, we can get this stuff figured out. But it is tough.

Mr. ARCURI. I couldn't believe how many complaints I was getting from my unit there, saying all of the stores that normally give were saying that Syracuse already came in and the bigger city, and we gave to them, so we don't have anything left for the smaller communities. It sort of trickles down. So I think the smaller community, the harder it is.

Mrs. EMERSON. And even if you have the ability to spend money at a store, sometimes it is even harder to get it in the smaller communities. We don't have any kind of public transportation system where I live. I don't know if you all do up there. It is a challenge. But I appreciate what you are saying.

Mr. ARCURI. Thank you very much.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Dr. Foxx.

Dr. FOXX. Well, I have been sitting here debating whether I should say anything at all today or not. There are probably few people in Congress who grew up as poor as I did, so I understand maybe better than all of you who are working at this vicariously, the issue of having to provide food for yourself. I think because my husband and I both come from that background and have succeeded in a time when really the people in our area mostly were extraordinarily poor, we have a somewhat different idea about how people can be helped or should be helped.

Seriously, where I grew up, I grew up in the poorest county in North Carolina at the time I was growing up, and basically my husband has been providing for himself since he was 10 years old because his father died, and his mother was totally illiterate. Yet they managed.

There were no food stamp programs in those days, there were no public help programs, yet the people in that area may not have had the best nutrition, but they survived. Most of the people that we know have succeeded pretty well, and the area has changed a lot, but I think it is partly what has made both of us very conservative and partly why we come at it from such a different point of view.

I believe there is a need to help people who are extremely poor and have no access to food, but I think that many times government programs designed to help people have not done the things that they ought to do, and that many times our government itself through its policies have made things more difficult for people. I think that we have in many cases forced both parents to work because of high taxes. I think in many cases, because of increased rules and regulations, we have driven jobs overseas.

So I come at it from a point of view of allowing people to do more for themselves so that they have the dignity of being able to do those things.

My daughter grew up working. She worked as a cashier in a grocery store. If she were here, she would tell you that made a conservative out of her because she saw the tremendous abuse of food stamps by people from working in a grocery store and had a really big impact on her.

So, again, I support our need to do the kind of things that we should do as a government and as a culture. I differ a little bit with Mr. McGovern that I do think the role of the churches is to help people in our communities who can't help themselves. One of the reasons I support food banks a great deal is because I see a great deal of community support for them. So while I think there may be a good reason to have a heightened focus on the issue, I would like to see more done in the private sector rather than from the governmental sector.

Again, I have lived it. My husband has lived it. I have lived on less than \$1 a day, Jo Ann, not just to experiment, but because I had to. People can do it and survive and even thrive. And you know what? I am still very frugal as a result of having lived that way.

Mrs. EMERSON. That is certainly something that I can't say that I have experienced before, but I do think that the point is clear that we have a lot of different means with which to try to attack this problem, and obviously the more that we can do from the private sector, from the faith-based community—because all of the churches in my hometown of Cape Girardeau, for example, are involved in food bank-type efforts. Our Ministerial Council in Cape Girardeau is quite good because my minister happens to be the head of it, and for the Presbyterian Church this is an important issue and one we are trying to work on nationally.

However, I daresay there are other leaders in our communities who ought to know exactly what is going on in the community with regard to this just from the private sector perspective, and there is not that coordination beyond just what our ministerial alliance does.

So I think by having a conference like we want to have, it at least allows us to focus. And as Jim said earlier, if successful, it may well turn out that we can continue to diminish or we can begin to diminish the governmental piece and rely more on the private sector and the faith-based community.

I will say one thing, and this is interesting, and I think I might have mentioned it to Jim once. Our public health department in Wayne County, Missouri, which is one of my poorer counties, actually works with their TANF recipients. They actually challenged all of them to grow their own fruits and vegetable garden. Now, fruits are a little tough to do. You can do strawberries or blueberries, but other fruits are too complicated, and we don't have that environment like you have in Florida, for example, or Texas, where you can grow citrus.

But anyhow, it has been very, very important, and our University of Missouri Extension Service actually worked hand in hand with them as well. And so all of a sudden we have, number one, all of these gardeners, and the Extension Service gave them the

seeds, everything, taught them how to take care of the soil and to properly water and stuff. But they actually taught them how to can, how to freeze, how to do all of this.

So it has been a great supplemental that didn't cost anybody anything, other than the professionals within those organizations, to even challenge TANF recipients. So we have more fruit and vegetable gardens in Wayne County.

But other than me, there is nobody that talks about this in my district, because I seem to be the only person other than the TANF recipients who know about it, and they don't want to tell anybody they are getting TANF because they are proud. It is a last resort for them. And most of them are all single mothers, I might add.

Anyway, but I do appreciate this, and you are a good resource, Virginia, I think, when it comes to this issue. But certainly it would be our hope that by being able to get organized and coordinated and really know what is out there should be one means by which—I mean, we should know this before we then add just yet another Federal program or whatever. So that is why I think this is absolutely critical.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Let me just say before you can go, I want to be clear, too, that what I am suggesting and I think what you are suggesting by this conference is not simply ways how government can do better, it is how we can work together with the private sector and the nonprofit sector, the churches, the synagogues, the mosques that do so much, to provide food and figure out ways to get people beyond relying on a safety net in order to feed their families.

I will say one other thing. One of the things about being in Congress is you get to meet a lot of different people, and you get to see a lot of different things that probably you might not necessarily see. I have been to a lot of emergency rooms in hospitals in Massachusetts where I have seen kids in emergency rooms being treated, and they are hungry. That just shouldn't be. Those kids need more than \$1 a day to get by, and if their parents aren't being able to provide for them, we need to get it to them, because if not, you are going to end up with a situation, as we have been ending up with in so many cases, where that young kid is going to be developmentally challenged, is going to have a whole bunch of health problems, and we are going to have to work with that kid until he is an old man or an old woman.

Part of what we are trying to do here is figure out how we can all do better. Maybe government needs to do less in some areas. Maybe government needs to do more in some areas. We need to do what works.

Mrs. EMERSON. We need to know what resources are out there that we just simply have no idea about.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I appreciate very much your coming, and thanks for your leadership.

Now I would like to welcome the Reverend David Beckmann from Bread for the World, followed by Robert Egger from the D.C. Central Kitchen, and Nicole Robinson from Kraft Foods. All three of you can get up there together.

Reverend Beckmann, we will begin with you.

**STATEMENT OF REVEREND DAVID BECKMANN, PRESIDENT,
BREAD FOR THE WORLD**

Rev. BECKMANN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As you know, I am deeply grateful for your leadership and your commitment; and, members of the committee, I really appreciate especially your opening statements. I found them really heartening. The whole conversation is really good.

I am David Beckmann. Bread for the World is a collective Christian voice urging our Nation's decision makers to end hunger in this country and around the world. I think this White House conference would help to launch an intensified nationwide effort to reduce hunger. The need is clear. That has already been talked about.

I want to talk about the opportunity, and from the perspective of an organization that works on hunger in our country and around the world, because one thing that has really struck us is that the world has made dramatic progress against hunger and poverty over the last several decades.

The last couple years have been terrible for hungry and poor people around the world. Even now, the proportion of the world's population that is hungry, undernourished, is much lower than it was three decades ago. Trade has been part of that. But it is just obvious to us that if Brazil and Bangladesh can dramatically reduce hunger and poverty, so can the United States.

In our own country, in fact, there have been times when we made real progress against hunger and poverty. One of the best times actually for progress was in the 1960s and early 1970s, and the White House conference in 1969 was part of that. What we had then, and, in fact, in almost every place where there is progress against hunger, is a combination of economic growth and focused efforts. In the 1960s we had economic growth, and both the Johnson and the Nixon administrations really focused additional effort on nutrition programs, antipoverty programs, and we cut the poverty rate in half. We dramatically reduced hunger during that time.

So progress is possible also in our own country. I think the U.K.'s recent experience is also relevant. When the Labor Party came to power in 1997, they committed their nation to ending child poverty. That is a commitment that all three parties in the U.K. now embrace; they are going to end child poverty. So they have put some programs and policies in place, they are monitoring progress, and, in fact, there has been a substantial reduction in child poverty in the U.K. over the last decade or so because there is a commitment by all the parties and a focused effort.

I think it is important that our new President has made this commitment to end child poverty. He also wants to end child hunger. He wants to end child hunger by 2015. He wants to cut poverty in half. He has also made it clear that reducing world hunger is a theme in his foreign policy.

I think the policies he outlined to end child hunger are really remarkably good. The policies are stronger nutrition programs and better nutrition programs, but it is also economic recovery. The policies are complementary efforts to reduce poverty, especially among poor families with children. And in the Obama statement

about child hunger, there is a strong emphasis on what churches and other community organizations do in fostering a more fruitful interaction between what communities can do and what we can do through Federal and State government. So I think that this White House conference under this President should really focus on the goal of ending child hunger and try to enlist a bipartisan effort and a society-wide effort.

We are not going to end child hunger in America if this is not a bipartisan program. So, Mr. Sessions and Dr. Foxx, the themes that you have sounded of work, thrift, markets, growth, trade, those have got to be part of the solution. If it is just government programs, and if it is not a bipartisan, nationwide effort, it isn't going to be sustained from now to 2015, and we are not going to succeed.

So one thing that this White House conference could do is to strengthen the bipartisanship around this goal. Fortunately, ending hunger, reducing hunger, is an issue that has been a bipartisan issue for a long time. Bob Dole is a member of my board. He worked with George McGovern way back in the late 1960s and early 1970s to make progress against hunger. And what you, Mr. Chairman and Jo Ann Emerson, now do, your close partnership really maintains, embodies that bipartisanship that I think is crucial to success in reducing hunger.

I think a White House conference could also foster fuller engagement of all sectors of society. Several state governments are committed to ending child hunger, so what are they learning? How do we get more state governments involved? How do we get our community organizations working in a strategic way as part of a broader system so all that effort helps to make the bigger system more effective?

Corporations are clearly part of what needs to happen. We are not going to end child hunger if we don't get more corporations that are serious about feeding people, and also pushing for systemic solutions that will actually solve the problem.

So I think the White House conference is a great idea. And since I am a preacher, I just want to close with a religious comment. No matter what you think about God, we know that helping hungry people is something that is really good. It is holy. And I think that this White House conference could help to move our Nation so that we don't have widespread hunger among our kids.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Rev. Beckmann follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REVEREND DAVID BECKMANN, PRESIDENT, BREAD FOR THE WORLD

Ms. Chairwoman and members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity. I am David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World, a collective Christian voice that urges our nation's decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad.

THE CASE FOR A NATIONWIDE EFFORT TO REDUCE HUNGER NOW

The need is obvious. As of 2007, 36 million Americans lived in households that struggled to put food on the table. One in six U.S. children lives in a food insecure household, and food insecurity does long-term damage to young children.

The recession has sharply increased hunger and poverty. Food banks report an increase, a 33 percent increase in requests for emergency assistance over the last 12 months.

The persistence of mass hunger in our richly blessed nation is completely unnecessary.

Bread for the World works to reduce hunger both in this country and around the world, so we are struck by the fact that the world as a whole has made remarkable progress against hunger and poverty over the last several decades. High food prices and the recession have sharply increased world hunger recently. But even after this setback, less than one in five people in developing countries are undernourished. That is terrible, but it is down from more than one in three in 1970.

We haven't made sustained progress against hunger and poverty in this country over the last several decades, so it has become hard for us to imagine progress. Let me list some of the developing countries that have made dramatic progress: China, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, Brazil, and Mexico. In each case, the reduction of hunger and poverty has depended on economic growth combined with focused efforts. If Bangladesh and Brazil can dramatically reduce hunger and poverty, so can the U.S.A.

The United States has been able to reduce hunger and poverty when our economy was strong and we made a focused effort. In the 1960s and early 1970s, for example, we cut the poverty rate in half and dramatically reduced hunger. We expanded nutrition and anti-poverty programs during both the Johnson and Nixon administrations.

The recent experience of the United Kingdom is relevant. When the Labor Party took office, the nation adopted the goal of ending child poverty and established a timetable of intermediate targets. They increased support for child care, raised the minimum wage, tightened child support enforcement, and established child savings accounts. They reduced the child poverty rate from a third in 1997 to 18 percent in 2005. All three political parties in the United Kingdom now share the goal of ending child poverty.

U.S. GOALS FOR REDUCING HUNGER AND POVERTY

President Obama has proposed that our nation commit to ending child hunger by 2015 and cutting poverty in half over the next ten years. He and Secretary Clinton have also made reducing world hunger a priority in our nation's foreign policy.

I think the proposed White House conference would be very helpful. It could focus especially on more fully defining a strategy to meet the President's goal of ending child hunger in this country by 2015 and to begin engaging enlisting our entire society in this effort.

President Obama outlined a plan to end child hunger in America during his campaign. I have attached his proposal to this testimony. I find it compelling. It talks about strengthening the national nutrition programs. The child nutrition programs are being reauthorized this year, and the extra \$1 billion a year that the President has proposed is crucial to progress against child hunger. Obama's plan also calls for the engagement of communities. More charitable effort is focused on hunger than on any other social problem, and there's a lot to be gained through collaboration between all these community efforts, state governments, and the federal government. The Hunger-Free Communities Program, authorized in the farm bill, is one way to help foster this collaboration, and the President has requested an initial appropriation for Hunger-Free Communities in his first budget request.

The Obama plan is also clear that nutrition programs alone will not end child hunger. We also need economic recovery and broader efforts to reduce poverty, notably tax credits for poor families.

Secretary Vilsack and White House staff are talking about the President's goal of ending child hunger. But now that President Obama is in power, we need an official statement of the administration's plan. That plan will need to be debated and win broad, bipartisan political support.

Mounting and maintaining a national effort to end child hunger by 2015 will require bipartisan commitment. Hunger is not a Democratic or Republican issue. Fortunately, hunger has always been a bipartisan issue. Bob Dole and George McGovern worked together to reduce hunger in the early 1970s, just as Jo Anne Emerson and Jim McGovern often work together now.

Some people will say we can't afford to tackle the problem of hunger now. But efforts to reduce hunger stimulate the economy and boost worker productivity. Over the longer term, no investment pays higher returns than providing adequate nutrition for children.

A successful national commitment to end child hunger will also require active leadership by state governments, and several are already committed to the goal. We also need the involvement of religious and charitable networks, civil rights groups,

unions, corporations, universities, and many committed individuals. The proposed White House conference can begin to shape a social movement to get the job done.

A FAITH PERSPECTIVE

I'm a Christian preacher, so please permit me to speak briefly from the perspective of faith. As I have come to realize that hundreds of millions of people around the world are escaping from hunger and poverty, I've become convinced that this is God moving in our history. It is the great exodus of our time.

No matter how you think about God, it's hard to imagine that God is not impatient with the persistence of mass hunger in our richly blessed country. I'm hoping that we will emerge from this economic crisis as a better country. And what change would be more important ethically than ending widespread hunger among America's children?



OBAMA AND BIDEN: TACKLING DOMESTIC HUNGER

"We've got rising food prices here in the United States. My top priority is making sure that people are able to get enough to eat." Senator Obama [Meet The Press, 5/4/08]

When he was a child, Barack Obama's mother briefly received food stamps to put food on the table when she needed help. As a result, Barack Obama understands firsthand that federal nutrition and food assistance programs play a key role in minimizing the ill-effects of poverty and improving the diets of low-income working families, especially children. Barack Obama will strengthen and expand nutrition assistance programs and commit to ending childhood hunger by 2015.

Barack Obama and Joe Biden recognize that with rising food prices, existing benefits and programs are not enough to provide a healthy meal. Too many of our fellow citizens - over 35.5 million Americans, including 12.6 million children - face a constant struggle against hunger. For that reason, they supported provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill that improved the Food Stamp Program (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program/SNAP) and strengthened other nutrition programs, such as increasing funding for emergency food assistance and improving the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables in schools with significant numbers of low-income children.

Improving and expanding federal food assistance and nutrition programs will also be a key component of ending hunger in the United States.

PROTECTING VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS

- Senior Citizens. Too many of our seniors are forced to choose between spending their fixed incomes on food or medicine. Help is available to millions of seniors living on fixed incomes through SNAP and the federal health insurance programs that can help pay for prescription drugs and Medicare premiums, but too often seniors don't know about these programs and don't enroll. Much of this problem is caused by different federal government agencies failing to work together to solve the problems of our citizens. An Obama Administration will change that dynamic and work aggressively to create streamlined program rules and enrollment processes to make it easier for low-income seniors to get both the nutrition and health coverage for which they are eligible and which they deserve.
- Infants and Toddlers. Many of our most vulnerable citizens, especially seniors and very young children, need nutrition assistance to lead full and productive lives. The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program, for example, ensures that children have access to the

basic nutrition they need. It is a smart investment and prevents health care costs by helping to ensure the healthy development of infants and toddlers.

Addressing Immediate Need as a Result of Economic Crisis: Barack Obama has a comprehensive plan to jumpstart the economy and prevent 1 million Americans from losing their jobs. The plan also helps to address the economic instability that has made it more difficult for families and seniors to put food on the table. The Obama-Biden \$25 billion State Growth Fund will prevent state and local cuts in health, education, housing and provide other vital support to low-income families, including a temporary boost in SNAP benefits. This will get immediate help to the 1 in 10 Americans (1 in 5 children) who rely on this program to meet their food needs as well as help to stimulate the economy.

Tackling Poverty: The most effective way to eliminate childhood hunger and reduce hunger among adults is through a broad expansion of economic opportunity. Unfortunately, the past eight years have seen a significant retreat from the gains made in reducing poverty in the 1990s. From 2000 to 2007, the number of individuals living in poverty rose by nearly 6 million, to a total of 37.3 million. During the same time period, the number of Americans experiencing food insecurity increased as well. Barack Obama understands that poverty is the primary cause of hunger and has a comprehensive plan to reduce and alleviate poverty, including providing permanent tax relief for working families, expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit, raising the minimum wage, and providing affordable, accessible health insurance.

Eliminate Child Hunger by 2015: According to the Department of Agriculture, in 2006, 430,000 children in the United States experienced hunger. Further, 1 in 8 Americans and 1 in 6 children lives in a household that is food insecure -- an unacceptable situation. Among Hispanic and African American households, rates of food insecurity are even higher. Hunger exacts serious tolls on the health and development of children, and is associated with poor health, behavioral problems, and developmental problems. As President, Barack Obama will fight to end child hunger by 2015 through his anti-poverty plan, as well as through major commitments that build upon existing federal food assistance programs.

Feeding and Nourishing America's Children. Barack Obama and Joe Biden believe that federal nutrition programs, such as Food Stamps/SNAP, the School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, Summer Food Service Program, and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) are critical to delivering nutrition assistance to lower income families and they were proud to support the increases in funding for these programs in the 2008 Farm Bill.

Our federal nutrition programs not only reduce hunger, they reduce poverty, prevent obesity, strengthen schools and child care programs, and boost children's health, development and school achievement. As president, Barack Obama will improve access and participation in school meals and expand the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, which provides free fresh fruits and vegetables to low-income elementary school children. He will work with Congress to produce a strong Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Bill that better meets the needs of America's children and pregnant women.

Providing All Poor Children with a Free School Meal. Simplifying program rules in the National School Lunch Program will not only reduce paperwork and administrative costs, but will also ensure that low-income children receive the nutrition assistance they need. Automatically enrolling children who are already participating in the Food Stamp Program in the National School Lunch Program has reduced program error and increased the number of needy children who receive meals. An Obama-Biden administration will seek to build on this success by automatically enrolling more poor children in the school meals program who are participating in other means tested programs such as federal health programs.

Providing Nutrition Assistance throughout the Year. Though school-based nutrition programs reach many eligible children during the school year, hunger doesn't take a break during the summer, when most children lose access to school-based federal nutrition assistance such as the National School Lunch Program. To fight hunger during the summer, Obama will expand the summer feeding program. And, for rural areas where summer feeding programs may not be available, he will implement a pilot program to provide poor children with additional nutrition through SNAP. An Obama-Biden Administration will also support solutions to child hunger that occur after school and on weekends.

Supporting Community-Based Providers. Food banks and community-based food providers are often the first point of contact for families who need help putting food on the table. Barack Obama and Joe Biden are proud of their support for the historic levels of support provided to food banks in the 2008 Farm Bill and will work to ensure that food banks and community-based food providers have the food and funding necessary to carry out their critical work in the future.

Improve Government's Response to Hunger: Though our federal food assistance programs are effective when they reach those in need, many eligible families and children don't participate in these programs. For example, the Food Stamp Program serves only two-thirds of eligible recipients. Too often, unnecessary hurdles and a bureaucratic culture get in the way of meaningful assistance for the most vulnerable populations. An Obama-Biden administration will ensure strong program integrity and improve government's performance while still providing strong customer service.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Egger.

**STATEMENT OF MR. ROBERT EGGER, PRESIDENT, D.C.
CENTRAL KITCHEN**

Mr. EGGER. Thank you, everybody, for this opportunity. I am here to testify, of course, about the need, but also, as my friend David suggested, about this amazing opportunity for a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition.

For those of you who don't know, I work just down the Hill from this Chamber at the D.C. Central Kitchen. Every day we collect almost 2 tons of food from Federal buildings, restaurants, hotels and other food service businesses, which we use to train unemployed men and women, many of whom are homeless or fresh from prison, for jobs in the very businesses which donate the food. Since opening on Inauguration Day 1989, we have distributed 22 million meals and placed 700 men and women in food service jobs.

In addition, I travel extensively throughout the country, first to help open similar community kitchens in most of your districts, and recently to start a new project we have called Campus Kitchens, which interestingly there is one at Wake Forest, one at Baylor, and soon one at Boston University.

In all of these travels, what I see is, frankly, very troubling, and I am going to speak here more to almost the business side of hunger, because donated food for our national network of kitchens, food banks and pantries relies upon a rapidly decreasing supply. It is—and this has to be understood—lost profit for the businesses that donate it, and the advent of new inventory controls and alternate markets, this is taking up what used to be a steady stream of nutritionally dense donations and turning it into a trickle.

In short, our supply of food is decreasing at the very moment the need is increasing.

And I am not speaking about the current need that has been exacerbated by our economic downturn. While this is immediate and pronounced, it will also likely be mitigated when America's economic ship is righted.

And this next part, I am really glad to be looking up under the watchful glare of Claude Pepper, who was the last person in this body who really spoke passionately and consistently about our elders. What I am speaking about is the fact that 80 million baby boomers are going to be coming right down the road. Every day in America, 12,000 people turn 60. There is a waiting list in half of American cities today for Meals on Wheels.

And, again, there are 80 million people coming. This generation will outlive every previous generation by an estimated 10 to 20 years. Yet the level of saving for this generation will most likely be insufficient to ensure that they will be able to afford anything resembling their current lifestyle. Simply put, we can predict with alarming accuracy that there is going to be a wave of older Americans who will need substantial and sustained nutritional aid.

This will be a very, very different group than the prideful generation that Representative Emerson spoke of, people who avoided the stigma. This new generation are already leaving traditional senior centers and congregant meal sites and they will require most likely demand meals that will be far more nutritionally com-

plex and varied than were currently provided by charitable outlets. In short, they are not our grandfathers' seniors.

So now is the time to really look hard. Again, this is the powerful opportunity to really look at childhood hunger, senior hunger, but more importantly, I think, as everyone suggested, the amazing opportunities we have to reorganize what is already here.

For example, the current Federal reimbursement rate for a typical senior meal is close to \$5 per meal. In rural communities where small farms still operate, programs that purchase local food will be able to elevate the impact of Federal funds while also serving more nutritious meals to our elders.

This new generation will also want to maintain activity as long as possible, so linking food availability to volunteering could also be a way great way to ensure the physical and social well-being of our elders.

Intergenerational food programs—and I am just going stop a second to say, we have built a system in which we feed children here and seniors here. So the idea of intergenerational programs could be a tremendous way for seniors to not only transfer knowledge at after-school programs, but also be involved in intergenerational service programs. And speaking for the program I work with, there are 60,000 school-based cafeterias where we could potentially have intergeneration after school, but where, frankly, we could produce for a generation of working Americans healthy, reasonably priced meals to go made from local foods, that are involved in job training programs and also, again, give our kids access to cafeterias as learning centers so we can talk about nutrition but also math, science, history and get community services at the same time.

Historic charity has served our country well; however, the era of extra is coming to an end. The entire system relies on extra food, extra money, extra clothing, extra time; and we are just running out of that. A White House conference could pave the way for a new approach, one that incorporates revenue-generating employment projects, sustainable agriculture, school-based generational programs, along with many other important ideas that emphasize the value of our elders.

I just want to add on two more things, based on some of the comments I heard earlier. A spectacular area to talk about—and I think Representative Arcuri was talking about small rural communities. Very few rural communities have processing centers. In fact, what you have in many states is fresh fruit and vegetables oftentimes that aren't of the grade that is available to be sold. There is no place to process them except for sending them outside the state, and then they have to be sold back to people in the state. So rural processing plants are an amazing opportunity that is sitting right there.

And the other thing I wanted to point out is, one of the top five things our country ever did was create a land grant university system. And the land grants were built around the agriculture schools. And those ag schools administer 4-H, WIC, and the entire extension program, and there is probably no greater existing resource than the American extension system. It is a little bit old and I think it is ideally suited for the kind of changes we are talking about. But this will only be brought about, I think, with the kind

of leadership that I think Mr. McGovern is alluding to in calling for this conference. So I heartily approve it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Egger follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. ROBERT EGGER, PRESIDENT, D.C. CENTRAL KITCHEN



combating hunger
creating opportunity

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Robert Egger

Chief Executive Officer
Michael F. Curtis, Jr.

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Michael Freedman
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Tiffany Gotthof
Washington Hospitality Foundation

Ryland Johnson
Zab Restaurant

David Kassar
Georgetown Private Clinic

LaShon Nell
Brownell and Gulean, LLP

Jodie Kelley
Farne Mae

Rev. Ray Kemp
Woodstock Theological Center

Ris Lacoste
Two-time Capital Food Fight Champion
Chef and Owner, Rio Restaurant

Sam LeBlanc
Balancing Act

Chance Patterson
XMI Radio

Barton Seaver
2007 and 2008 Capital Food Fight Champion
Sustainability Consultant

Cedricy Slaughter
Clark Construction

Twanda Thomas
Martha's Table, DCCC C/F Graduate

Nancy Torray
Torrey Family Foundation

Rhonda Wingham
NewP

Chairs Emenius

Josef Anders
TheFoodness, Inc.

Rob Walker
Track Food Group, Inc.

LHW #8233 / CFC #87938

May 12, 2009

TO: Congressman Jim McGovern, House Hunger Caucus

FROM: Robert Egger, President, DC Central Kitchen

RE: White House Conference on Hunger

I am here today to testify to the need for a White House Conference on Hunger, and to ask members of this Committee to work with all haste to convene this gathering.

I work just down the Hill from this Chamber, at the DC Central Kitchen. Everyday, we collect almost two tons of food from federal buildings, restaurants, hotels and other foodservice businesses which we use to train unemployed men and women, many of whom are homeless or fresh from prison, for jobs in the very businesses which donate food. Since opening on Inauguration Day in 1989, we have distributed over 22 million meals and placed 700 men and women in foodservice jobs. In addition, I have traveled extensively throughout the country to help open similar "community kitchens" in 30 other cities, as well as 20 of DC Central Kitchen's own "campus kitchens", which operate in college or high school cafeterias, which has given me a deeper understanding of the current state of hunger in America.

What I see is very troubling. The donated food that our national network of kitchens, food banks and pantries relied upon is rapidly decreasing. It is, after all, lost profit to the businesses that donate it, and the advent of a new era of inventory controls and alternative markets has taken what used to be a steady stream of nutritionally dense donations and turned it into a trickle.

In short—our supply of food is decreasing at the very moment that need is increasing.

And I am not speaking about "current" need that has been exacerbated by our economic downturn. While this is immediate and pronounced, it will most likely be mitigated when America's economic ship is righted.

I am speaking about the 80 million "baby boomers" that are coming down the road.

Everyday in America, 12,000 people turn 60. There is already a waiting list for Meals on Wheels in 50% of our cities.

This generation will outlive every previous generation by an estimated 10-20 years. Yet the level of savings for this generation will, most likely, but insufficient to insure that they will be able to afford anything resembling their current lifestyle.

Simply put—what we can predict coming with alarming accuracy is a wave of older Americans who will need substantial and sustained nutritional support. They will be VERY different than the "prideful" generation we currently serve—those who avoid the perceived stigma of a hand-out.

This new generation is already shunning traditional “senior centers” or “congregate meal sites” and they will require, and most likely demand meals that will be far more nutritionally complex and varied than are currently provide through charitable outlets. In short—they are not your Grandfathers seniors.

So...now is the time for us to redefine our approach and commit ourselves to new systems that better utilize existing resources.

For example--the current federal re-imbusement rate for a typical senior meal is close to \$5.00 per meal. In rural communities where small farms still operate, programs that purchase local foods will be able to elevate the impact of federal funds, while also serving more nutritious meals to our elders.

This new generation will also want to maintain activity as long as possible, so linking food availability to volunteering could also be a way to insure both the physical and social wellbeing of our elders. Inter-generational food programs could also be a way for seniors to transfer knowledge at after-school mentoring program. Combining programs like this could also elevate the use of America’s 60,000 school based cafeterias, where healthy, reasonably priced meals to-go could be made available to both seniors and working families, which could also generate funds for schools.

Our historic charity food system has served this country well. However...the era of extra is coming to an end. There will be less food and most likely, less extra money at the end of the year to donate to traditional charitable organizations. A White House Conference can help pave the way for a new approach—one that incorporates revenue generating employment projects, sustainable agriculture, and school based intergenerational programs along with—and more importantly---a renewed emphasis of the value of our elders.

I hope you will help insure that this meeting is convened within the year.

Thank you.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Ms. Robinson. Welcome.

**STATEMENT OF MS. NICOLE R. ROBINSON, DIRECTOR OF
CORPORATE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, KRAFT FOODS**

Ms. ROBINSON. Thank you.

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Sessions, and members of the subcommittee. I am Nicole Robinson, Director of Corporate Community Involvement at Kraft Foods, and I am sincerely honored and privileged to join you here today to share with you a little about Kraft Foods' efforts to improve nutrition and hunger. I applaud you for your commitment and attention to this most pressing social issue.

As the second largest food company in the world, Kraft Foods is really acutely aware that many men, women and children face hunger. In the U.S. alone, 36 million, nearly one in eight—quite staggering. And many of them lack access to the nutritious fresh fruits, vegetables, and dairy products necessary to avoid diseases like obesity, diabetes, and other chronic illnesses. So we are very concerned about that.

With the recognition that these challenges cannot be resolved alone, Kraft Foods welcomes the opportunity to partner with non-profit organizations and government. As embodied in your bill, we share your desire to foster a high-level dialogue on this effort.

To that end, a little bit about Kraft Foods: We have donated nearly \$770 million of cash and food over the last 25 years to address hunger, and we have recently pledged \$180 million over the next 3 years to address malnutrition around the world. By 2010, we will have programming in the U.S., Indonesia, Philippines, China, Australia, Brazil, Russia, and select European markets; and with your permission, I would like to highlight a few of these efforts.

In the U.S., I would like to say that Feeding America, our partnership, has really been rooted in that idea of collaboration. We are proud of our community nutrition program, which was designed to improve the quality and increase the quantity of food distributed through food banks. If you think about the early era of food banks, in the beginning it was primarily canned goods and other shelf-stable items, and Kraft Foods made a deliberate effort to, over the course of this decade-long partnership, award 600 grants across 46 States which we are proud to say today delivered over 1 billion servings of fresh food. So we are quite proud of that effort.

Now, during this unprecedented time of increased demand, during this economic environment, we have awarded Feeding America another \$4.5 million over the next 3 years to purchase 25 mobile pantries. And mobile pantries are really a viable solution in communities where families are far away from food banks or pantries or grocery stores; the pantry brings the food to them. It is really a traveling pantry on wheels, and particularly in urban settings where there is an increase in "food deserts"—places where there are no grocery stores, it is another viable option.

I have had the opportunity to volunteer in several of these pantry distributions. Most recently I served on a Saturday morning on Chicago's West Side. Although the distribution begins at 9 o'clock in the morning, I thought, well, I will arrive early, 8:00 a.m., and

it was kind of sobering to see 200 to 300 people lined up when I arrived at 8:00, and many of them had been there as early as 6:00 a.m.; and I think that is certainly a testament to the need that is out there and exists today.

But I am happy to say that by June we will have mobile pantries in New York; Chicago; San Antonio; Madison, Wisconsin; Central Valley, California; Cincinnati, Ohio; Newberry, South Carolina.

But we are also—that is a little bit about what we have done in the U.S., but we are also very sensitive to the prevalence of malnutrition outside of our borders which threatens the health and well-being of children around the world. In the Philippines, for example, there are 2.9 million hungry children, and in Indonesia it is a staggering 13 million undernourished children. And to that end, earlier this year we awarded a \$3 million grant to Save the Children for the next 3 years to help address malnutrition in those countries.

So we are very excited about that effort as well; and that is just what we are doing on the corporate end, and it doesn't really stop there. It then begins with our employees, and they are just as committed. The spirit of volunteerism is across our organization. We have a senior executive that is on the board of Feeding America. We have another that is on the board of the Congressional Hunger Center, and we have employees at food banks across our plants, our distribution centers. Everywhere they either serve on boards or they are volunteers at pantries, they are either packing food or distributing food; so we are equally proud of that.

But there are also higher skilled opportunities and, in fact, we have a partnership with the United Nations Private Sector Program, and since 2001 Kraft Foods has sent over 100 employees to 29 countries to assist farmers, agencies, and manufacturers so that they can learn how to produce food in country, which I think is really important. And we have had volunteers in Albania, West Africa, Ecuador, Fiji, Grenada and Nicaragua, among others.

So, in closing, I would just like to say that Kraft really does have a strong appreciation for the role that private industry can play. We have done a lot and we have a commitment to continue to do so. The partnership between us and the nonprofit community across the globe has helped communities have better access to nutrition.

Again, we are honored to partner with you in this effort, and many thanks for this opportunity.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Robinson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MS. NICOLE R. ROBINSON, DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, KRAFT FOODS

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Sessions and members of the Subcommittee. I am Nicole Robinson, Director of Corporate Community Involvement at Kraft Foods.¹ It is a privilege to join you today to highlight Kraft Foods' efforts

¹ Kraft Foods (<http://www.kraftfoodscompany.com>) makes today delicious in 150 countries around the globe. Our 100,000 Kraft Foodies work tirelessly to make delicious foods consumers can feel good about. From American brand icons like Kraft cheeses, dinners and dressings, Maxwell House coffees and Oscar Mayer meats, to global powerhouse brands like Oreo and LU biscuits, Philadelphia cream cheeses, Jacobs and Carte Noire coffees, Tang powdered beverages and Milka, Côte d'Or, Lacta and Toblerone chocolates, our brands deliver millions of smiles a day. Kraft Foods (NYSE: KFT) is the world's second largest food company with annual revenues of

Continued

to end hunger and improve nutrition in America. I commend you, Chairman McGovern and Ranking Member Sessions, for your commitment to this important cause.

As the second-largest food company in the world, Kraft Foods is acutely aware that hunger ranks among our most pressing social problems. Thirty-six million Americans—nearly one in eight—are hungry. And many more cannot afford fresh fruits, vegetables and dairy products that can help them avoid obesity and diseases related to calorie-rich, nutrition-poor diets.

Kraft Foods is pleased to join you in your efforts to eradicate hunger in this country, and throughout the world. We share your desire—as embodied in the Chairman’s Bill—to foster a high-level dialogue on the subject. And we welcome the opportunity to partner with hunger relief organizations like those represented here today and with the federal government to find viable, effective solutions to this problem.

To that end, I am proud to report that around the world Kraft Foods has donated nearly \$770 million in cash and food over the last 25 years to support hunger relief. And we have pledged an additional \$180 million over the next three years to address malnutrition globally. By 2010, we will have hunger programs in the US, Indonesia, the Philippines, Russia, Brazil, Australia, China and select European markets.

As large as those numbers are, they only provide a general perspective on our efforts to combat hunger and malnutrition. With your permission, I would like to highlight some of our specific efforts.

COLLABORATION—KRAFT FOODS & FEEDING AMERICA

Here in the United States, Kraft Foods is a founding corporate partner of Feeding America (formerly America’s Second Harvest) and remains among the organization’s top supporters today. Our partnership is rooted in the spirit of collaboration demonstrated by the Community Nutrition Program, which works to increase the quality and quantity of food distributed to families via the food bank network.

I am particularly pleased to note to this audience that over the course of this decade-long partnership, we have provided needy Americans with 1 billion nutritious servings of fresh produce, dairy, and much needed protein-rich meat items.

And we aren’t finished yet. Going forward, Kraft is evolving the Community Nutrition Program initiative. We recently announced a 3-year, \$4.5 million grant to Feeding America to launch the national Kraft Mobile Pantry Program. We learned from Feeding America that rural food pantries frequently are located more than 120 miles from the nearest food bank. And in urban settings, there is an increase in “food deserts”—places where there are no grocery stores or supermarkets within walking distance. The Kraft Mobile Pantry Program will rollout 25 mobile pantries that will bring nutritious food into these underserved neighborhoods.

On average, each mobile pantry will make three trips a week and distribute 1.1 million meals annually to Americans who might otherwise go hungry. Collectively, the Kraft Mobile Pantries will provide nearly 55 million meals to those in need.

I am pleased to share that by June of this year, mobile pantries will be donated to Feeding America food banks in New York; Chicago; San Antonio; Madison, Wisconsin; Central Valley (Fresno area), California; Cincinnati, Ohio; and Newberry, South Carolina. In 2010–2011, we will expand to additional markets across the United States.

COLLABORATION—KRAFT FOODS AND SAVE THE CHILDREN

Kraft Foods is also acutely aware that malnutrition threatens the health and well-being of children in other countries. In the Philippines, for example, 2.9 million families struggle with hunger. Indonesia faces a similar challenge with 13 million undernourished families. Earlier this year, Kraft Foods awarded Save the Children a \$3 million dollar grant over the next three years to help improve the nutritional well-being of impoverished children in the Philippines and Indonesia.

EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERISM

Fighting hunger is more than just a corporate concern at Kraft Foods. Our employees are just as committed—and that is why we provide opportunities for them to give back to their communities. This spirit of volunteerism reaches across every level of the organization. For example, a senior Kraft Foods executive currently serves as Feeding America’s board chair. Another Kraft Foods executive serves on

\$42 billion. The company is a member of the Dow Jones Industrial Average, Standard & Poor’s 500, the Dow Jones Sustainability Index and Ethibel Sustainability Index.

the Board of the Congressional Hunger Center. Other Kraft Foods employees volunteer at food banks and pantries across this country, packing food and distributing meals. Still others serve on local food bank boards.

Employees also share their expertise through a United Nations Private Sector Program. Since 2001, Kraft Foods has sent over 100 employees to 29 countries to assist local agencies, farmers, and manufacturers produce foods in-country. Our volunteers have helped Albanian coffee producers to create the formula to produce a consistently perfect bean and taught temperature control to meat processors in West Africa. Our employees have also assisted with projects in Ecuador, Fiji, Grenada and Nicaragua, among others.

CONCLUSION

In closing, Kraft Foods has a strong appreciation for the role private industry can play in helping to address social issues. The partnership between Kraft Foods and hunger-relief experts across the globe has helped more people in more communities have better access to balanced nutrition. And we are honored to partner with you in this effort as well. Again, many thanks for this opportunity and I look forward to answering your questions.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Thank you, all three of you, for your testimony. I appreciate it very much.

Rev. Beckmann, I will be the first to admit that government can't solve this problem all on its own. But I want to hear from you whether or not the faith-based community can solve this problem all on its own.

Reverend BECKMANN. No, no way. Churches and charities can't do it all. That is clear to anybody who is involved in church and charitable effort to help hungry people. Those people who are really involved in it know that they are overwhelmed, that people are lining up before and after the churches and charities are done.

It would be great if churches had the resources to be doing more than they are doing, but they are doing an awful lot, and their charitable efforts are in some cases extraordinary. But government has substantially more resources than the other actors. There are also policy questions, questions about how you make a society in which people have an incentive to work and work pays and there are jobs. So there are lots of things that government needs to do to be doing its part to overcome hunger.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Egger, I have visited DC Central Kitchen. I appreciate the fact that it is not only about food but about nutritious food. I actually cut up cucumbers and carrots, but I was told by the person who worked there that I was doing it poorly. But I saw a lot of fresh vegetables going into the ingredients. So if you could comment on the importance of nutrition as part of our challenge here.

But the other thing, too, is the types of people that you help. Some people are people that can be trained and go back into the workforce, but there is a big population out there that if it weren't for the fact that you could bring them a meal, they would be basically helpless—people that are homebound, people that have physical challenges that don't enable them to kind of, if I gave them a dollar, to be able to kind of stretch it and make it all work.

If you could comment on the types—

Mr. EGGER. Yes. What has really been exciting over the past few years is how many organizations have really focused on nutritional content, recognizing, in effect, that it does no good to feed somebody unless you are going to feed them something that is going to be make them healthy versus unhealthy.

So many of us have really focused—in fact, I think in Mr. Arcuri’s district, the food bank in central New York was one of the very first to draw a line, saying, in fact, we are not going to serve anything that does not meet this nutritional content.

We are very deliberate about where we distribute the meals we produce, and we are looking to create almost a ladder. So, in effect, we are trying to partner with agencies, for example, it might be a drug treatment program in which we are helping heal physically by giving them good food, so that they ultimately become productive citizens; but at the same time the meals we serve save that agency millions of dollars a year, which means they can produce more men and women who are not going to be using drugs anymore.

If done correctly—and I think this is to your point in this conference—done correctly, it is more than just you are hungry, here is a meal. It is part of a broader system, whether it is educating children that become—I really want to frame this away from the right/wrong, good/bad rhetoric into the smart/dumb concept.

And so this whole thing, by making sure kids are fed, they are just going to be productive, healthy, taxpaying citizens in our future versus young men and women who will be a drain on our economy at the very time, with 80 million people getting older, we will need them to be productive taxpayers.

So the nutritional impact side is huge, and this is what I think many of us are now looking at. The traditional approach of saying, would you please give us, restaurants, hotels, farmers, give us what you have, versus a new approach where we start to actually purchase, subsidize local farmers, taking the food that they normally couldn’t sell in a retail outlet, but that they—it is still good food. If we could start to purchase that, use leveraged Federal dollars again, not only are we going to get better food, but we are going to be stimulating the economy at the same time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Ms. Robinson, first let me thank you for being here and let me thank Kraft for their generosity. Food banks and food pantries in Massachusetts have benefited from your generosity. And, again, not just the food and not just the money, but the help and support of your employees who have been willing to go out and volunteer and to help make our communities better.

I appreciate the fact that you are even being more generous in the upcoming year. But the sad reality is that in America hunger is getting worse and the cost of food is more expensive than it was.

So—if I gave you a \$100 donation 2 years ago, it doesn’t buy the same today as it did 2 years ago, so I may think I am being just as generous, but people get less food with it. And I am wondering whether—you sell food products. I mean, have you been able to control your prices or has the cost of fuel and everything else resulted in some spikes in your products as well?

Ms. ROBINSON. Kraft, too, has been impacted in that way. But what we have tried to do is help our consumers, which are also food bank clients, because they are the working poor, understand better how they can budget their meals. How do you create dinners off of \$10? How do you generate that shopping list, which may or may not include Kraft products? And how do you learn how to cook nutritious meals and create those dinners on a lower budget? So we are doing things like that.

And healthy lifestyles, I know there has been a lot of talk about nutrition. To us, obesity—malnutrition is sort of the intersection between hunger and obesity. You can not have enough to eat and be malnourished, and still be malnourished at the end of the day. So to complement our hunger programs, we also deliver healthy lifestyle programs that include nutrition education and physical activity.

And as a part of these programs, there is this huge component about shopping. When you go to a grocery store, how do you sort of navigate the store and select the right items and sort of build your shopping basket, which is a skill that, quite frankly, a lot of consumers don't have today.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I wish all grocery stores would have nutritionists come in once a week or that there was more truth in advertising. I mean, even those of us who consider ourselves educated shoppers, if you go to the supermarket and you see 50 percent less sodium, than what? The Dead Sea? I mean, you may think you are making the right choices, and you shouldn't have to be a chemist to figure out a good diet.

But also, too—and I learned this when I was on the Food Stamp Budget—it is tough to be poor. It takes a lot of time to shop when you are poor because, for me, if I run out of groceries on a Thursday and I go shopping on a Saturday, I mean, I will just go back and get more. But for a lot of people, that is it. And it takes a lot of time, and it is very, very difficult. And again, too often, people aren't given an option for a healthy choice. So I appreciate, in particular, what Kraft is doing in terms of kind of educating people and helping provide people the kind of guidance on how you can do it for less. But I think just listening to the panelists here today—Democrat, Republican, I mean all of you and what you represent—getting everybody in a room together and figuring this out so that we could actually stand up and say, here is our plan, here is what the faith-based community is going to do, here is what the corporate community is going to do, here is what the nonprofit community is going to do, here is what the Federal Government is going to do, on the Federal, State, or local level; and just tie it all together and let us see who keeps their assignment. And whoever doesn't do their assignment, we will yell at them and make them feel bad.

But I appreciate that.

Mr. SESSIONS.

Mr. SESSIONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me thank each of you. I think each of you recognizes that there is not one way to solve this problem. I would, however, like to thank each of you because none of you work for the government the way I understand it. You are out in the free enterprise system, the marketplace, trying to do things because you see need.

Robert, I hear you talk very plainly about children and elderly people, or at least the future. The numbers are staggering. To Members of Congress, they are staggering. We have heard these figures before. We recognize we need to prepare people for what is ahead.

I would say that I think each of you needs to be a part of this White House conference when it does take place. I am very much

in favor of people who can thoughtfully articulate what we ought to have, rather than demonstrating or breaking down barriers, but rather coming and saying, here are the cold hard facts of the case, here is a strategic and a tactful way to get to where we want to go.

And the fact of the matter is that we are starting with—I am not trying to start an argument. We are starting with a really good story about what exists out there, and we need somebody to complete it. We need to work better together. I am not going to say we are happy, we are satisfied; you didn't say that. But I think that we should start with what we have and make it better and then go and find where the holes are.

Nicole, thank you for taking time to do this. I probably put you up to this, and for that I apologize. But I think the story that you told was very compelling, and it is a commitment that you make, all three of you make. You know what the issue is, you see where the holes are, you see where we need to go. And like anything else, I think if you coach a lot of us, we can get there.

Thanks to each of you. Thank you.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I want to thank my colleague, Mr. Sessions, for his very thoughtful remarks. I appreciate very much your being a part of this hearing.

Thank you for putting Nicole up to this. I appreciate that too.

Mr. SESSIONS. It is my fault. She did great too.

Mr. MCGOVERN. She was wonderful. And I think Robert and David are great friends of advocates. Thank you very much. I think we are on our way.

Before we close this hearing, I want to ask unanimous consent to insert into the record 30 different letters of endorsement for this bill, and an op-ed by former Senator Bob Dole and George McGovern in support of a similar conference.

So thank you for being here.

The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:25 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

CURRICULUM VITAE AND TRUTH IN TESTIMONY FORMS FOR WITNESSES TESTIFYING
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE (WHERE APPLICABLE)



David Beckmann, President Bread for the World

David Beckmann is one of the foremost U.S. advocates for hungry people. He has been president of Bread for the World since 1991, leading large-scale and successful campaigning to strengthen U.S. political commitment to overcoming hunger and poverty. Before that, he served at the World Bank for 15 years, overseeing large projects and driving innovations to make the Bank more effective in reducing poverty.

Bread for the World is a collective Christian voice urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad. Bread for the World members write personal letters and emails and hold meetings with their members of Congress. Working through churches, campuses, and other organizations, Bread members engage more people in advocacy. It is one of the largest organizations in the world dedicated to building the political will to end hunger.

Bread for the World has an impressive record of achievement under Beckmann's leadership. The U.S. government has doubled funding for effective programs that help developing countries in Africa and other poor parts of the world, and this would not have happened without the persistent advocacy of Bread for the World members. Bread has also helped to strengthen U.S. nutrition programs, assisting millions of the families in this country who struggle to feed their children. Recently, Bread for the World initiated a campaign to press Congress to reform U.S. foreign assistance to make it more effective in reducing hunger and poverty.

Beckmann is also president of Bread for the World Institute, which provides policy analysis on hunger and strategies to end it. He founded and serves as president of the Alliance to End Hunger, which engages diverse U.S. institutions – Muslim and Jewish groups, corporations, unions and universities – in building political will to end hunger. Beckmann also proposed what has become the More and Better Campaign, an international coalition of NGOs that work for more and better funding for agriculture, rural development and nutrition. Beckmann has recently appeared on *Bill Moyer's Journal*, *Religion & Ethics Newsweekly*, NPR's *Morning Edition*, and *The Diane Rehm Show*.

Beckmann earned degrees from Yale, Christ Seminary, and the London School of Economics, and five universities have awarded him honorary doctorates. He is a clergyman as well as an economist. He has written many books and articles, including *Transforming the Politics of Hunger* and *Grace at the Table: Ending Hunger in God's World*. Beckmann speaks Spanish. He has lived in Bangladesh and Ghana, overseen projects in Bolivia and Ecuador, and visited more than 70 countries.



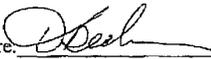
50 F Street NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20001

T 800.82.BREAD
F 202.639.9401

www.bread.org

Committee on Rules
Witness Disclosure Requirement - "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)

Your Name: David Beckmann		
1. Are you testifying on behalf of a Federal, State, or Local Government entity?	Yes	No x
2. Are you testifying on behalf of an entity other than a Government entity?	Yes x	No
3. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you <u>have received</u> since October 1, 2007: None.		
4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you are representing: Bread for the World		
5. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any offices or elected positions held or briefly describe your representational capacity with the entities disclosed in question number 4: President		
6. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, do any of the entities disclosed in question number 4 have parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities for whom you are not representing?	Yes	No x
7. If the answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which were received by the entities listed under question 4 since October 1, 2007, which exceed 10% of the entities revenue in the year received, including the source and amount of each grant or contract to be listed: No organization affiliated with Bread for the World has a government grant or contract.		

Signature:  Date: 5-14-09

**Robert L.E. Egger
Founder and President of
DC Central Kitchen, Inc.**

Robert Egger is the Founder and President of the DC Central Kitchen, where unemployed men and women learn marketable culinary skills while foods donated by restaurants, hotels and caterers are converted into balanced meals. Since opening in 1989, the Kitchen has distributed over 20 million meals and helped over 700 men and women gain full-time employment.

While Robert still maintains a day to day presence at the Kitchen, he is deeply involved in both local and national initiatives that elevate the broader dialogue.

Locally, Robert was the founding Chairperson of both the DC Mayor's Commission on Nutrition and Street Sense, Washington's "homeless" newspaper.

Nationally, Robert was a Founder and the Co-Convener of the first ever Nonprofit Congress in 2006. He now directs the V3 Campaign (www.v3campaign.org), which is working to get the Voice, Value and Votes of the nonprofit sector recognized in every election in America.

Robert was included in the Non Profit Times list of the "50 Most Powerful and Influential Nonprofit Leaders" in 2006, 2007 and 2008. He was the recipient of the Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington's 2007 Duke Ziebert "Lifetime Achievement" award and the 2004 James Beard Foundation Humanitarian of the Year award. He has also been named an Oprah Angel, a Washingtonian of the Year, a Point of Light and one of the Ten Most Caring People in America, by the Caring Institute. He is also a 14-gallon blood donor to the American Red Cross.

Robert's book on the non-profit sector, *Begging for Change: The Dollars and Sense of Making Nonprofits Responsive, Efficient and Rewarding For All*, which was released in 2004 by HarperCollins, received the 2005 McAdam Prize for "Best Nonprofit Management Book" by the Alliance for Nonprofit Management.

Robert speaks throughout the country and internationally and writes blogs and editorials to share his ideas about the nonprofit sector and the future of America. To check out Robert's most recent speaking schedule, blogs, and editorials, please visit www.robtegger.org.

Committee on Rules
Witness Disclosure Requirement - "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)

Your Name: Robert Egger

1. Are you testifying on behalf of a Federal, State, or Local Government entity? Yes No

2. Are you testifying on behalf of an entity other than a Government entity? Yes No

3. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 2007:

- 1. FEMA \$ 12,545.00
- 2. CACFP \$ 35,608.00
- 3. CORP. FOR NATIONAL SERV. \$ 177,500

4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you are representing:

—

5. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any offices or elected positions held or briefly describe your representational capacity with the entities disclosed in question number 4:

—

6. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, do any of the entities disclosed in question number 4 have parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities for whom you are not representing? Yes No

7. If the answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which were received by the entities listed under question 4 since October 1, 2007, which exceed 10% of the entities revenue in the year received, including the source and amount of each grant or contract to be listed:

—

Signature:



Date:

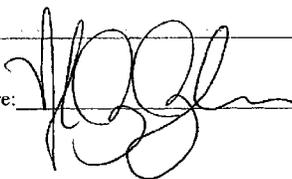
05.12.09

Nicole R. Robinson, Director of Corporate Community Involvement for Kraft Foods, leads Kraft's philanthropic initiatives which provide cash contributions of \$18.3MM to fund hunger-relief, healthy lifestyles, humanitarian aid and employee involvement programming. Nicole leads a 6 member staff to deliver programming in partnership with NGOs across the US, Asia Pacific, Europe, Middle East, and Latin America. Nicole's specific responsibilities include strategic planning, program development, research, and measurement and evaluation efforts across all programs. Nicole brings a unique mix of business acumen as well as non-profit sector accomplishments to philanthropy as an advocate for affordable housing, hunger, women's rights and other social justice issues. Over the years, Nicole has served as a volunteer, board member and speaker to numerous organizations. Nicole has an MBA from DePaul University of Chicago and is a graduate of Loyola University's Philanthropy and Non-Profit Sector Program. Nicole is a 2007-2008 fellow with the Association of Black Foundation Executives. She also serves on the Corporate Committee of the Chicago Consortium to Lower Childhood Obesity in Chicago, the Council on Foundation's Committee on Corporate Grantmaking and the Illinois Hunger Advisory Committee.

Committee on Rules
Witness Disclosure Requirement - "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)

Your Name: Nicole R. Robinson	
1. Are you testifying on behalf of a Federal, State, or Local Government entity?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Are you testifying on behalf of an entity other than a Government entity?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 2007: Not applicable	
4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you are representing: Kraft Foods	
5. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any offices or elected positions held or briefly describe your representational capacity with the entities disclosed in question number 4: Employed as Director of Corporate Community Involvement at Kraft Foods	
6. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, do any of the entities disclosed in question number 4 have parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities for whom you are not representing?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7. If the answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which were received by the entities listed under question 4 since October 1, 2007, which exceed 10% of the entities revenue in the year received, including the source and amount of each grant or contract to be listed: Not applicable	

Signature: _____



Date: _____

5/14/09

LETTER FROM MS. VICKI ESCARRA, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF FEEDING AMERICA, TO REPRESENTATIVES JAMES MCGOVERN AND JO ANN EMERSON, DATED MAY 9, 2009.



May 9, 2009

The Honorable James McGovern
U.S. House of Representatives
438 CHOB
Washington, D.C 2007

The Honorable Jo Ann Emerson
U.S. House of Representatives
2440 RHOB
Washington, D.C.20007

Dear Representatives McGovern and Emerson:

On behalf of the more than 63,000 local feeding agencies and 27 million people served by our national network of 206 *Feeding America* food banks, I am writing to strongly endorse H.R. 2297, your bill proposing a long awaited White House Conference on Food and Nutrition.

It has been some 40 years since President Nixon opened up the 1969 White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health saying that it “set the seal of urgency on our national commitment to put an end to hunger and malnutrition and poverty in America.” Starvation and severe malnutrition have been largely eliminated in America, thanks in great measure to many of the federal laws and policies that grew out of the recommendations of the 1969 White House Conference. Yet, much work remains. Hunger and food-related health problems remain with us, as does poverty, despite all of the progress made in the past 40 years.

In 2007, more than 36 million people lived in food insecure households; 12.7 million of them children. The current recession almost certainly has increased these numbers. Too many elderly are not participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (formerly Food Stamp) Program; only about one-third of the elderly eligible for this program receive benefits. The elderly have special nutrition dietary conditions and needs and often require food intake with their medicine to ensure that it is fully absorbed into their systems. Without food, the medicine is less effective and they are more susceptible to recurring illnesses and other serious medical problems.

Children also have special needs if they are to grow and develop mentally and physically. This need doesn't stop with the end of the school year. For many poor children school meals may be their main source of nutritious foods. Yet, when the school year ends less than 12 percent of those low income children receiving free and reduced price school meals are participating in the Summer Food Service Program. Moreover, only 11 million of the 31.6 million children participating in the school lunch program receive school breakfasts. And, many needy children do not have access to healthy meals in afterschool, out-of-school, weekend and child care food programs. As the economic recession continues the situation grows worse and our food banks are taking on more and more families in need of food to help them through these difficult times.

As the new Administration prepares to deal with the serious crisis in health care in America, it is only fitting that attention be given to the significant role that poor nutrition and diet plays in our nation's health status, treatment, and well-being. We know that obesity is a growing problem for children and across all age groups. We also know that poor nutrition interferes with cognitive development in children, and can lead to greater incidence of illness, school absence, and disruptive classroom behavior. As we see our food safety system coming under increasing attack, it is time to bring this and all of these food and nutrition issues to national attention with a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition.

Much has changed since the 1969 White House Conference, including advances in research and knowledge about of the complex interactions between diet, health, and nutrition. If we are to succeed in ending hunger, improving health and nutrition, and promoting food safety, it is time for a new generation of experts and a new Administration to look at these issues as they affect our nation's well-being in the 21st century. A 2009 White House Conference on Food and Nutrition offers a critically needed opportunity to complete what was begun in 1969.

It is time to give national recognition to these problems and a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition would offer an opportunity to complete what was started in 1969.

Feeding America, I am very pleased to endorse your proposal for a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. I hope you will for contact me if I can be of further help in promoting this legislation, and thank you both for all that you do to help us feed the millions in our nation who are facing hunger every day.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vicki Escarra". The signature is written in black ink and is centered on the page.

Vicki Escarra, President and CEO
Feeding America

LETTER FROM MS. CHRISTINE A. POWARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE ASSOCIATION OF NUTRITION SERVICES AGENCIES, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 12, 2009.



May 12, 2009

The Honorable James McGovern
U.S. House of Representatives
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman McGovern,

Thank you for your commitment to ending hunger in America and for introducing H.R. 1869 and H.R. 2297, calling for a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. The Association of Nutrition Services Agencies is thrilled to support this legislation, and we are committed to working together in a national discussion of how we can ensure every man, woman and child has access to appropriate food and nutrition.

ANSA's community-based member agencies have as many as 25 years of experience feeding chronically ill people in urban, suburban and rural neighborhoods across the country. Our members serve more than 10,000,000 medically appropriate meals a year to hundreds of thousands of people living with HIV/AIDS, cancer, diabetes, heart disease and myriad other conditions whose effects are compounded by hunger, food insecurity and undernutrition. We know that access to healthy, nutritious food has the potential to save billions of dollars in health care costs by delaying or preventing the progression to late-stage disease.

We commend you on your leadership on hunger and nutrition issues. ANSA and its members across the United States are excited to engage in a national discussion about nutrition and hunger and how access to appropriate food not only can alleviate food insecurity, but how it can improve the lives of millions of our most vulnerable neighbors facing illness.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CP", followed by a horizontal line.

Christine A. Poward
Executive Director

LETTER FROM THE REVEREND LARRY SNYDER, PRESIDENT OF THE CATHOLIC CHARITIES USA, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 12, 2009.



Working to Reduce Poverty in America.

May 12, 2009

The Honorable James P. McGovern
U.S. House of Representatives
438 Cannon Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jo Ann Emerson
U.S. House of Representatives
2440 Rayburn Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives McGovern and Emerson:

Episcopal Liaison

The Most Reverend
Michael P. Driscoll,
MSW, DD
Bishop of Boise

Chair

Sr. Donna Markham

Vice Chair

John J. Young

Secretary

Brian R. Corbin

Treasurer

Marín Gutiérrez

President

Rev. Larry J. Snyder

Thank you for your leadership in crafting legislation to address the issue of hunger in the United States. The White House Conference on Food and Nutrition (H.R. 2297 and H.R. 1869) is a necessary step, not only in ending hunger in our nation, but also to reduce poverty. As you well know, more than 35 million Americans struggle with hunger. Children account for 12.6 million (16.9 percent of all children) of those who go hungry throughout the year. Senior citizens are also disproportionately affected by hunger; over three-fourths of Americans older than 65 experience difficulty meeting their daily food needs. The face of hunger also belongs to the working poor, among whom 40 percent must turn to emergency food shelters to fight off hunger. Faced with low wages, rising housing, healthcare, food and utility costs, low-income households may cut meals and/or buy less nutritious or cheaper food to make ends meet.

In 2007, Catholic Charities agencies served 1.6 million people in soup kitchens; 1.2 million people in congregate dining; 2.7 million people in food banks/pantries; and delivered more than 550,000 home delivered meals. Our Catholic social teaching calls us to prioritize the poor and the hungry. Our tradition holds that the moral test of society is how it ensures the needs of the most vulnerable, including those unable to provide adequate food for themselves and their families. It is unacceptable that in a nation as bountiful as ours that children, adults, and senior citizens experience food insecurity that puts their physical, mental, and developmental health at risk. Access to basic nutrition is an important part of our work to reduce poverty in America.

While Catholic Charities has over two centuries of leadership in providing services to the poor, the government and our nation's leaders have a special responsibility to ensure the common good for our society. Therefore, we join you in calling on our government to do more to address the issue of hunger in our nation.

Sincerely,

Fr. Larry Snyder
President



Sixty-Six Canal Center Plaza • Suite 600 • Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: (703) 549-1390 • Fax: (703) 549-1656 • www.CatholicCharitiesUSA.org

LETTER FROM Ms. MARGARET SAUNDERS, PRESIDENT, AND THE REVEREND DOUGLAS A. GREENAWAY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL WIC ASSOCIATION, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 12, 2009.



National WIC Association
2001 S Street NW Suite 580 Washington D.C. 20009-1165
phone 202 232 5492 fax 202 387 5281 www.nwica.org

12 May 2009

The Hon James McGovern, Chair
Subcommittee on Rules and Organization
Committee on the Rules
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman McGovern:

We write on behalf of the over 9 million mothers and young children participating in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children known as WIC and the over 12,200 WIC service provider agencies in support of HR 1869 and HR 2297 calling upon the President to convene a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition.

In a time of continuing economic uncertainty, despite the good efforts of the President to stimulate and restore the nation's struggling economy, food insecurity is on the rise and more and more families are forced to turn to the nation's nutrition programs to assure that their basic food needs are met.

As the President and Congress commit to re-building the nation's education infrastructure, enhanced standards and investments in early childhood and school related nutrition will contribute significantly to improved academic achievement.

And, as the President and Congress discern the direction of health care reform, it is essential that the nation's leaders understand and embrace the critical role of public health nutrition in improving health outcomes and the overall health and well-being of America's families.

In short, public health nutrition is the nexus that will assure positive effects on academic achievement, our nation's productivity and our national health.

The time for a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition is now. The **National WIC Association** looks forward to playing a significant role in such a conference and focusing the nation's attention on the indisputable evidence that supports the work and successes of our nation's food and nutrition programs and important role that they play in assuring a healthier more vibrant nation.

Sincerely,
National WIC Association


Margaret Saunders
President


The Rev. Douglas A. Greenaway
Executive Director

WIC for a Healthier America

Margaret Saunders, MS RD LDN Illinois President
Patti Henick, RD CD MPA Wisconsin Vice President
David Thomason, MPA Kansas Past President
Christine O'Brien, LD Iowa Secretary
Betsy Clarke, MS Minnesota Treasurer
Rev. Douglas A. Greenaway Washington, DC Executive Director

LETTER FROM MR. MAX FINBERG, DIRECTOR OF THE ALLIANCE TO END HUNGER, TO
REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 13, 2009.

May 13, 2009

The Honorable James McGovern
U.S. House of Representatives
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20003

Dear Representative McGovern:

I am writing to support for your efforts to convene a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition in order to focus on hunger in our country. Your leadership on this initiative, as embodied in H.R. 2297 and H.R. 1869, as well as many other related issues is inspiring.

A White House Conference on Food and Nutrition will provide a framework to address the intersecting issues of hunger, health and nutrition. Nearly 40 years have passed since President Nixon convened the last White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. The 1969 Conference brought national attention to the importance of proper nutrition and the government's role in addressing the root causes of hunger. The federal policies that emerged from the Conference, including expansions to the food stamp program and the school lunch program, have had lasting effects on our nation's efforts to cut hunger and poverty. However, President Nixon's 1969 statement during the Conference still rings true today: "despite our achievements much remains to be done."

During his campaign, President Obama presented a comprehensive plan to tackle domestic hunger, including ending child hunger by 2015. The new Administration's plan has been underscored by the President's 2010 budget, which requests an additional \$1 billion per year for child nutrition programs, and \$7.77 billion for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program. A national discussion of hunger and nutrition will build on the Administration's current momentum and will identify innovative opportunities to end hunger. It is time to send a strong message about our government's commitment to continue the dialogue begun in 1969.

The Alliance to End Hunger engages diverse institutions in building the public and political will to end hunger at home and abroad. Our government spends more than \$60 billion per year addressing hunger and undernutrition, yet more than 36 million Americans live in food insecure households, almost 13 million of whom are children.

thealliance



toendhunger

50 F Street NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20001
Tel 202.639.9400
Fax 202.639.9401

www.alliance-to-end-hunger.org

Our most recent Hunger Message Project poll showed that three in five voters are impacted by the higher food prices, including one in five voters who are worried that they or someone they know will go hungry. With the current economic recession, more families will require nutrition assistance to make it through these tough times. The true cost of hunger is estimated to be more than \$90 billion per year, after accounting for the health care costs of treating nutrition-related illnesses. Studies have also demonstrated a strong correlation between nutrition and children's cognitive development.

As a tireless champion for hungry people, you understand the need to build the political will to end hunger, and the Alliance to End Hunger endorses your proposal for a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition.

Thank you for your leadership in Congress on this and other important issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Max Finberg". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Max Finberg
Director

LETTER FROM MR. GARY A. DAVIS, CEO OF EAST SIDE ENTREES, TO REPRESENTATIVE
JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 13, 2009.



20 Crossways Park North
Woodbury, NY 11797
516.682.6494
Fax: 516.364.7478

May 13, 2009

Dear Congressman McGovern,

Pleased be advised that we support the hearing on the White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. Nationwide we must be proactive and increase participation in child nutrition programs particularly school breakfast and summer feeding. Hunger and malnutrition are unacceptable options for our children. Greater outreach and increased participation must be accomplished.

For our youth to achieve their potential and maximize educational opportunities nutrition and school meals must be in the forefront. There are twenty two million children eligible for free or reduced school meals. School breakfast and summer feeding programs are only reaching a portion of these children. This must change dramatically to achieve President Obama's anti hunger pledge by 2015.

We support the pending bill HR 2297 and we are readily available for any requisite testimony.

Very truly yours,

**Gary A. Devis
C.E.O
East Side Entrees**

LETTER FROM MS. KAREN PEARL, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF GOD'S LOVE WE DELIVER,
TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 13, 2009.



Karen Pearl
President & CEO

May 13, 2009

The Honorable James McGovern
U. S. House of Representatives
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 10515

Dear Congressman McGovern:

I write in enthusiastic support for your introduction of H.R. 1869 and H.R. 2297, calling for a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. Forty years have passed since the last such Conference so another is long overdue. On behalf of our clients, staff, Board and volunteers I commend your initiative in proposing one.

Since its founding in 1985, God's Love We Deliver has provided over 10,000,000 home-delivered meals to clients living with life-altering serious illnesses throughout New York City and neighboring Hudson and Essex counties in New Jersey. Our staff of professional nutritionists has provided counseling and education to over 60,000 clients and caregivers.

Our clients have a range of illness – cancer, HIV/AIDS, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and others – and our experience clearly demonstrates the power of proper nutrition to assist in delaying or preventing the progression to late stage disease and in shortening, or rendering unnecessary, lengthy and expensive hospitalizations.

We hope that a significant aspect of the proposed Conference will be an exploration of "food as medicine" – the myriad ways in which appropriately designed nutrition therapy can benefit people with serious illnesses.

We at God's Love, together with our sister agencies across the country, look forward to working with you and your staff to ensure that the proposed Conference is successfully accomplished.

Once again, let me express our gratitude to you for your leadership in nutrition and hunger issues.

All my best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Pearl". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Karen" being more prominent than the last name "Pearl".

Karen Pearl

LETTER FROM MR. HADAR SUSSKIND, VICE PRESIDENT AND WASHINGTON DIRECTOR
FOR THE JEWISH COUNCIL FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES
MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 13, 2009.

JCPA

JEWISH COUNCIL
FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

National Member Agencies
 American Jewish Committee
 American Jewish Congress
 Anti-Defamation League
 B'nai B'rith
 Hadassah
 Jewish Labor Committee
 Jewish Reconstructionist Federation
 Jewish War Veterans
 National Council
 of Jewish Women
 Union for Reform Judaism
 Union of Orthodox Jewish
 Congregations of America
 United Synagogue
 of Conservative Judaism
 Women's American ORT
 Women's League
 for Conservative Judaism

Representative James P. McGovern
 Chairman, Subcommittee on Rules and Organization of the House
 438 Cannon HOB
 Washington DC 20515

May 13, 2009

Dear Representative McGovern,

The organized Jewish community has long demonstrated a commitment to ending hunger, and to caring for those who are less fortunate. Our faith informs this tradition as our oral law teaches, "*Do not neglect the children of the poor, for from them will go forth the law*" (Nedarim 81a). This mandate reflects that ending child hunger is not only a moral imperative; it is an economic imperative. If we do not take care of all of our children now, we are irreparably damaging the future for everyone. If we do not take care of all members of our community, we are neglecting our chief responsibility in this world.

In response to the traditional mandate to care for the poor, the Jewish community has long played a critical role in providing services to vulnerable populations. Additionally, we have demonstrated our commitment to helping President Obama to achieve his goal of ending childhood hunger by 2015 through multiple efforts, including a national mobilization around the Jewish holiday of Passover—called the **Child Nutrition Seder**. Communities across the nation held Seders in which they highlighted the parallel between the daily suffering of our ancestors and the continual suffering of America's children who live with hunger day in and day out.

The Jewish religion also stresses the importance of constant study and review. It is not enough to memorize a commandment or a bible passage; one must explore and interpret the many texts through which we keep our tradition alive and relevant.

116 East 27th Street, 10th floor • New York, NY 10016 • 212.648.6950 • Fax 212.686.1353
 1775 K Street NW, Suite 320 • Washington, DC 20006 • 202.212.6036 • Fax 202.212.6002
www.jewishpublicaffairs.org • contactus@thejcpa.org

Keeping with our tradition, we strongly support your proposal for H.R. 1869: White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. We would also like to express our support for H.R. 2297: To require the President to call a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. We support your proposal to review and explore the gains we have made in the last 40 years (since the first White House Conference on Food and Nutrition) and use this knowledge to address the issues associated with the rising cost of food and health care, increased obesity rates, and the health problems associated with obesity, poor nutrition, and hunger.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hadar', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hadar Susskind
Vice President & Washington Director
Jewish Council for Public Affairs

LETTER FROM MR. DAVID RICHART, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG AIDS
ALLIANCE, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 13, 2009.



May 13, 2009

The Honorable James McGovern
U.S. House of Representatives
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman McGovern,

Thank you, on behalf of Lifelong AIDS Alliance, for your continued support of a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. Please accept Lifelong's endorsement of both HR 2297 and HR 1869 in hopes of making this long-awaited conference a reality.

As the Pacific Northwest's leading AIDS service organization, Lifelong AIDS Alliance is committed to creating community, preventing new HIV infections, advocating for change, and caring for people in the Seattle area and the state of Washington.

Chicken Soup Brigade, Lifelong's Food Program, is a leader in improving the nutritional status of people living with HIV/AIDS and other life-challenging illnesses. Over the last year alone, we produced over 170,000 meals and provided nearly 38,500 grocery bags to 1,445 people in Seattle and surrounding counties. Since expanding our meal and nutrition counseling services to include people living with other disabling conditions, such as renal disease, multiple sclerosis and cancer, Chicken Soup Brigade is now the *only* program in the Pacific Northwest that delivers individualized meals and nutrition therapy, free of charge, to low-income people who are homebound due to illness or disability.

Lifelong AIDS Alliance would like to join other members of the Association of Nutrition Services Agencies in expressing our appreciation for your leadership in introducing this important legislation. We look forward to engaging in continued discussion as we seek to address issues of hunger and nutrition throughout the nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Richart", written over a horizontal line.

David Richart
Executive Director
Lifelong AIDS Alliance

Lifelong AIDS Alliance
1002 East Seneca Street
Seattle, WA 98122-4214

main phone: (206) 326-8979
main fax: (206) 325-2689
www.liaa.org

Lifelong AIDS Alliance is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization

LETTER FROM MR. JOEL BERG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NEW YORK CITY COALITION AGAINST HUNGER, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 13, 2009.



May 13, 2009

The Honorable James P. McGovern
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative McGovern:

I am writing on behalf of the 1,200 food pantries and soup kitchens in New York City – and the more than 1.3 million low-income New Yorkers they feed – to strongly endorse HR 1869 and HR 2297, which would launch a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition.

In calling for the previous (and to, this day, only) White House conference on hunger, which occurred in 1969, President Richard Nixon wrote: “We have long thought of America as the most bounteous of nations... [t]hat hunger and malnutrition should persist in a land such as ours is embarrassing and intolerable. More is at stake here than the health and well being of [millions of] American children.... Something like the very honor of American democracy is involved.”

The conference achieved historic, concrete results. Largely as a result of that conference, the President created the first federal agency specifically tasked with combating domestic hunger, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service. Also largely as a result of this conference, the President and Congress worked together to create the “Special Supplemental Food Program,” the forerunner to the WIC Program. Along with further safety net advancements made through the 1970’s by a bipartisan Coalition in Congress, the newly-instituted federal nutrition safety net helped ended starvation conditions and almost eliminated food insecurity in the U.S. altogether.

Unfortunately, America has gone backwards since 1969. Living wage jobs have been eliminated in vast numbers and the federal anti-poverty safety net has been slashed. As a result, fully 36.2 million Americans – including 12 million children – now live in households that can’t afford enough food. The time is long overdue for another White House conference on Food and Nutrition and another round of serious federal progress in reducing hunger in America,

Sincerely,

Joel Berg
Executive Director
New York City Coalition Against Hunger

LETTER FROM MR. KEVIN WINGE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR OPEN ARMS OF MINNESOTA, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 13, 2009.



May 13, 2009

The Honorable James McGovern
U.S. House of Representatives
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman McGovern:

Thank you very much for introducing H.R. 1869 and H.R. 2297, calling for a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. As the executive director of an agency that provides over 300,000 meals annually to people confronting chronic and progressive diseases in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area, I know how important it is to bring more attention to issues of food and nutrition in the United States.

Forty years is simply too long to have gone without a second White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. Open Arms of Minnesota applauds your efforts to convene a second conference and will work with the Association of Nutrition Services Agencies (ANSA), and your office, to assist your efforts.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kevin Winge'.

Kevin Winge
Executive Director

LETTER FROM MS. DEBORAH R. HINDE, PRESIDENT AND CEO TO VITAL BRIDGES, TO
REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 13, 2009.



May 13, 2009

The Honorable James McGovern
U.S. House of Representatives
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman McGovern:

Thank you for your commitment to ending hunger in America and for introducing H.R. 1869 and H.R. 2297, calling for a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. Vital Bridges strongly supports this legislation, and, as an ANSA (Association of Nutrition Services Agencies) member, to working together in a national discussion of how we can ensure that all Americans have access to appropriate food and nutrition.

Vital Bridges provides food and nutrition services to more than 1,500 low-income men, women and children in the Chicago metropolitan area who are impacted by HIV and AIDS providing more than 500,000 meals each year. High quality, medically appropriate nutrition is essential to their ability to improve their health and build self-sufficiency. Our clients, like millions of other Americans, do not have the resources to purchase adequate food and their food stamp awards, if any, are woefully inadequate to support a nutritious diet. We know that access to healthy, nutritious food helps our clients sustain their health and avoid costly health care interventions. It is clear that widespread access to nutritious foods would help all in the United States better manage our burgeoning chronic illness and obesity problems.

We commend you on your leadership on hunger and nutrition issues. We are excited about the prospect of a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition that would bring these issues to the public eye and forward national discussion on the best ways to alleviate food insecurity and improve the health of our country.

Sincerely,

Deborah R. Hinde
President & CEO

Vital Bridges 5543 N. Broadway Chicago, IL 60640 772-271-5168 www.vitalbridges.org

LETTER FROM MR. GREG LUKEMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF FOOD OUTREACH, INC.,
TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 14, 2009.



FOOD OUTREACH, INC.
3117 OLIVE STREET
ST. LOUIS, MO 63103
(314) 632-FOOD (3663)
FAX (314) 632-3673
WWW.FOODOUTREACH.ORG

May 14, 2009

The Honorable James McGovern
U.S. House of Representatives
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman McGovern,

Thank you for your commitment to ending hunger in America and for introducing H.R. 1869 and H.R. 2297, calling for a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. Food Outreach and The Association of Nutrition Services Agencies (ANSA) are thrilled to support this legislation.

Established in 1988, Food Outreach continues to be the only nonprofit organization that provides nutritional support to low-income men, women and children living with cancer or HIV/AIDS in the greater St. Louis area. After 18 years of providing nutrition support to men, women and children diagnosed with HIV/AIDS, Food Outreach expanded its program in 2006 to provide nutritious meals and nutrition education to individuals undergoing cancer treatment. Food Outreach also provides emotional support as our clients are fighting the most important battle of their lives. The food that we provide not only gives our clients vital nutrition, but it also helps certain medications' efficacy and clients tolerate their drugs. We provide over 1,100 meals each day and are on target to provide 400,000 meals by the end of this year.

Food Outreach joins all of ANSA's community-based member agencies to make sure the no one has to bear the unthinkable combination of hunger and life-threatening disease. With over 21 years of experience feeding chronically-ill people in urban, suburban and rural neighborhoods, we know the important role that nutrition plays with surviving both cancer and HIV/AIDS. By giving our clients access to healthy, nutritious food, we help keep clients in their homes which is a less expensive alternative to assisted living situations. Since nutrition support can delay and in some case prevent the later stages of either disease, there is the potential to save billions of dollars in health care costs

We commend you on your leadership on hunger and nutrition issues. Food Outreach, along with ANSA, is excited about the potential of a national discussion on these topics which ultimately can give people facing life-threatening disease the hope they can live for the day when there are further advancements in treatment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg".

Greg Lukeman
Executive Director
Food Outreach, Inc.

LETTER FROM MR. JAMES D. WEILL, PRESIDENT OF FOOD RESEARCH AND ACTION CENTER, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 14, 2009.

F·R·A·C



FOOD RESEARCH
& ACTION CENTER

May 14, 2009

Representative James McGovern
Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative McGovern:

We are pleased to endorse H.R. 1869 and H.R. 2297, which would authorize a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition.

As you know, this year marks the 40th anniversary of the White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health that President Nixon convened. That Conference and subsequent initiatives have greatly strengthened the nation's nutrition safety net and reduced the breadth and depth of hunger in this country. In particular, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/Food Stamps, School Lunch, School Breakfast, the Summer Food Program, WIC, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and commodities programs are helping to get nutritious meals to millions of needy Americans.

Nonetheless, far too many people still are without adequate diets. More than 36.2 million people live in U.S. households that face a constant struggle against hunger. At the same time, problems of hunger and food insecurity are contributing to greater obesity and health problems, as well as education and productivity shortfalls.

A new White House Conference on Food and Nutrition can help in focusing public policy on hunger, and developing the strategies and public consensus necessary to attain President Obama's goal of eliminating domestic childhood hunger by 2015 and lead to more positive health outcomes.

We appreciate your commitment and leadership in this important effort.
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James D. Weill".

James D. Weill
President

LETTER FROM MS. ERIN PULLING, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PROJECT ANGEL HEART,
TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 14, 2009.



4190 Garfield St., Unit 5 | Denver, CO 80216-6506
P.O. Box 7597 | Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7597
Phone: (303) 830-0202 | (800) 381-5612
(303) 830-1840 | (800) 731-5622 FAX
www.projectangelheart.org

May 14, 2009

The Honorable James McGovern
U.S. House of Representatives
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman McGovern,

As a program of home-delivered meals to Coloradans coping with life-threatening illness, Project Angel Heart understands the need for the movement to end hunger in America and make essential nutrition available to all. Thus, we truly appreciate your commitment to this issue, demonstrated by your introduction of H.R. 1869 and H.R. 2297, calling for a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition.

Project Angel Heart fully supports these efforts and the call for such a conference. We believe a White House Food and Nutrition conference will bring necessary attention to the fundamental issue of proper nutrition for all Americans. As Project Angel Heart's 1,700 annual Colorado clients can attest, the availability of appropriate, nutritionally balanced meals not only has an immense effect on quality of life, but can also mean the difference between life and death for vulnerable Americans. Programs such as ours keep critically ill people as healthy as possible in the simplest way possible – through proper nutrition. This straightforward action has far-reaching benefits, including a potential reduction in the need for costly health care services.

We eagerly look forward to a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition, not only for the important conversations it will involve, but also for the long-term potential it has for taking us a few steps closer to the essential goal of addressing hunger issues in America. We truly appreciate your leadership on this issue and lend our whole-hearted support to your efforts.

Sincerely,

Erin Pulling
Executive Director

moving with love for people living with HIV/AIDS, cancer, and other life-threatening illnesses

Colorado's Most Outstanding Nonprofit Organization
—El Pomar Foundation 2002



A MEMBER OF CommunityShares

LETTER FROM MS. ELLEN PARKER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PROJECT BREAD—THE
WALK FOR HUNGER, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 14, 2009.



May 14, 2009

The Honorable James P. McGovern
Chairman
Subcommittee on Rules and Organization of the House
United States House of Representatives
438 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman McGovern:

I write to you today in strong support of HR 1869 and HR 2297, both titled the White House Conference on Food and Nutrition Act, which direct the President of the United States to call a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition.

As Massachusetts's leading anti-hunger organization, Project Bread is dedicated to alleviating, preventing, and ultimately ending hunger in Massachusetts. Over half a million people in our state alone are struggling to put food on the table. It is critical that our leaders work together to find policy solutions to this problem that affects so many Americans.

Project Bread is so appreciative of all of your efforts to raise awareness and seek solutions for health problems stemming from hunger and inadequate nutrition, and we strongly support your efforts to establish this White House Conference. This conference would be a critical step towards making policy that could help end hunger and improve nutrition in the United States. I strongly urge Congress to pass these important pieces of legislation.

Sincerely,

Ellen Parker
Executive Director
Project Bread-The Walk for Hunger

LETTER FROM MS. PAT NICKLIN, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SHARE OUR STRENGTH, TO
REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 14, 2009.



1730 M STREET NW, SUITE 700
WASHINGTON, DC 20036

TEL: 800 969 4767
FAX: 202 547 5868

WWW.STRENGTH.ORG

May 14, 2009

The Honorable James McGovern
United States House of Representatives
438 Cannon Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative McGovern:

Share Our Strength enthusiastically endorses bills H.R. 2297 and H.R. 1869, introduced to the 111TH Congress, to require the President to call a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. We believe that such a Conference will provide an important forum for highlighting the issue of hunger in the United States and sharing solutions with the public on how we can end it.

Share Our Strength believes that the Conference will be instrumental in helping achieve President Obama's call to end childhood hunger by 2015. We believe that every child should have the ability to access nutritious food where they live, learn and play. Share Our Strength also believes that the Conference could be instrumental in helping to define the role for everyone in the fight to end childhood hunger, including individuals and organizations in the public and private sectors.

Sincerely,

Pat Nicklin
Managing Director

NO KID HUNGRY

LETTER FROM MR. ROBERT GREENSTEIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 15, 2009.



820 First Street NE ■ Suite 510 ■ Washington DC 20002
 (202)408-1080 ■ fax (202)408-1056 ■ center@cbpp.org ■ www.cbpp.org

Robert Greenstein May 15, 2009
 Executive Director

Ina J. Lav
 Deputy Director

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 The Common Enterprise/
 San Antonio

William Julius Wilson
 Harvard University

John Kramer
 Founding Chair
 1937-2006

The Honorable James McGovern
 United States House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative McGovern:

In your role as Co-Chair of the House Hunger Caucus, you have worked tirelessly to educate policy makers and the public about the problems of hunger and poverty, both in our country and abroad. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities strongly supports your efforts to draw attention to these issues and to promote positive policy solutions to address them.

Largely due to the strength of the governmental response, the nation has made considerable strides in reducing severe hunger and malnutrition in the United States since the late 1960's. Nevertheless, significant problems remain. The latest Census numbers show that 36 million people were in food insecure households in 2007; more than 12 million of them were children. Given the Administration's commitment to eliminate childhood hunger by 2015, we agree that this is a propitious time to engage all levels of government in considering how to make further progress.

A national conversation on the root causes of hunger — and the means to address it — could be quite important. We look forward to working with you on this matter and on your continued efforts to improve policy in this area.

Sincerely,

Robert Greenstein
 Executive Director

LETTER FROM MR. JOHN T. EVERS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE FOOD BANK ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK STATE, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 15, 2009.

Food Bank Association of New York State



235 Lark Street
Albany, NY 12210
(518) 433-4505
(518) 433-4506 (fax)

John T. Evers
Executive Director

May 15, 2009

Representative James P. McGovern
Chairman, Subcommittee on Rules and Organization of the House
438 Cannon HOB
Washington DC 20515

Dear Representative McGovern:

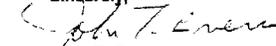
I am writing to support your bill, H.R. 2297, proposing a much needed White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. The Food Bank Association of New York State represents 8 food banks serving 5,000 feeding programs supplying much needed food to over 3 million hungry people each year. One-third of those we serve are children.

It has been 40 years since the last White House Conference on Food and Nutrition was convened. That conference helped spur needed programs that have helped us address hunger in our nation. Now is the time to once again take a fresh look at hunger.

The new Administration has an ambitious agenda that includes major reforms to deal with the serious crisis in health care and to end to childhood hunger by 2015. A White House Conference on Food and Nutrition will help inform these debates and put forward a coordinated plan of action to end hunger and improve the diets of all Americans. We strongly urge that the issues facing emergency feeding programs, such as food banks, be part of this needed focus on nutrition and health.

Thank you for your efforts to raise awareness about hunger and elevate the importance of food and nutrition policy by proposing a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. We look forward to helping ensure all Americans have access to an adequate and safe supply of nutritious food.

Sincerely,


John T. Evers
Executive Director

cc:

Representative Louise Slaughter
Representative Michael Arcuri

LETTER FROM MR. CLYDE W. FITZGERALD, JR., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK OF NORTHWEST NORTH CAROLINA, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 15, 2009.



3655 Reed Street
Winston-Salem, NC 27107-5428
www.hungerwnc.org

May 15, 2009

Representative James P. McGovern
Chairman, Subcommittee on Rules and Organization of the House
438 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative McGovern:

I fully support your bill, H.R. 2297, proposing a much needed White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. I am the Executive Director of Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina, based in Winston-Salem, NC. Through our network of nearly 400 partner agencies across our service area, we provide food assistance to over 250,000 hungry Northwest North Carolinians. About 35% of those we ultimately serve are children, the most vulnerable segment of our society.

While this great country of ours justifiably prides itself on helping to feed the world, we, unfortunately, need to do a much better job of feeding those suffering from hunger right here in the USA. It has been 40 years since the last White House Conference on Food and Nutrition was convened. While considerable progress has been made, hunger remains a serious and growing problem in this country. The current dismal economic situation has significantly exacerbated this already-grave situation.

The funding provided by Congress to help feed those in need is very important in this winnable battle. However, the funds appropriated are miniscule relative to the total budget and are far less than required to successfully combat this problem. I sincerely appreciate your personal support and the support of your like-minded colleagues in working to ensure that our hungry citizens receive the food assistance they so desperately need. The Congressional Representative from my district, Representative Virginia Foxx, serves on your subcommittee and she is a tireless advocate for hungry North Carolinians and for all who suffer the problem of hunger across the United States. The leadership which you and Mrs. Foxx are providing is crucial to the passage of this important bill.

The Obama Administration has an ambitious agenda which includes ending childhood hunger by 2015. Hunger is a non-partisan, national issue that cannot be minimized. That's why the Conference you support is absolutely what is needed...and it's needed now!

Hunger is a solvable problem. Thanks for being such an important part of the solution.

Sincerely,

Clyde W. Fitzgerald, Jr.
Executive Director

CC: Representative Virginia Foxx

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- Leo Sasaki
- Barbara Saulpaugh
- J. Gardner Sheffield
- Michelle Speas
- Michael Vogel
- Jim Walker
- J. Dudley Watts, Jr.
- Karl F. Yena

Clyde W. Fitzgerald, Jr.
Executive Director



LETTER FROM DR. KEITH SCHILDT, PRESIDENT, AND MR. BOB BLANCATO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NUTRITION AND AGING SERVICES PROGRAMS (NANASP) TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON RULES AND ORGANIZATION OF THE HOUSE, DATED MAY 15, 2009.



House Committee on Rules
H-312 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

May 15, 2009

NANASP's
vision is to
reshape the
future of
nutrition and
healthy aging.

NANASP's
mission is to
strengthen
through
advocacy
and education
those who
help older
Americans.

TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON RULES AND ORGANIZATION OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Chairman and Members:

NANASP, the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs strongly supports H.R. 2297, legislation sponsored by Rep. Jim McGovern to require the President to convene a White House Conference on Nutrition. We also commend Rep. Jo Ann Emerson for her co-sponsorship of this legislation along with Rep. Jerry Moran.

NANASP is a membership organization serving the interests of providers of congregate and home-delivered nutrition services for the elderly as well as other professionals in the aging network.

It has been 40 years since the last White House conference of this kind was held, yet the significance of holding this Conference is more than just about history. It is needed for our nation to hold a national discussion followed by a plan of action to address root causes of hunger, food insecurity, and under-nutrition which is a growing intergenerational crisis in our nation.

From our experiences with the White House Conferences on Aging held in 1995 and 2005, we know they are valuable forums to lay a foundation for policy solutions for the future. They are important because they involve both the Congress and the Executive Branch, but just as important, the input of individuals who are named as delegates and help to prioritize issues.

There are a plethora of issues which would and should come before a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition related to hunger, malnutrition, and their impact on health care. The Conference can also spotlight innovative programs from the public and private sectors which are helping to address the nutritional needs of Americans. The Conference can be a catalyst to help identify and implement new ways to utilize the abundant agricultural resources of the U.S. Finally, this Conference can help identify a more active and coordinated role for the federal government to oversee our nation's response to hunger and the nutritional needs of vulnerable Americans.

Last year, NANASP testified at a hearing of the Senate Special Committee on Aging entitled, THE CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES, AND FUTURE OF SENIOR HUNGER IN THE UNITED STATES. Findings and recommendations presented that day remain germane and belong in a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. Our findings included national estimates of food insecurity among older Americans may be as high as 35 percent. Further, it was established that there is a close connection between

inadequate income and hunger and with the impact of the recession driving more and more seniors below the poverty line, this situation has worsened.

NANASP's Vision is to reshape the future of nutrition and healthy aging We are confident that this White House Conference will provide sufficient attention to the special impact which hunger and malnutrition have on our older Americans. We must commit ourselves to adequately fund key programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and make sure more outreach is done to get needy seniors enrolled. White House Conferences can and should be about advocacy. There is much to advocate for in this Session of Congress when we would expect this Conference to be held. We anticipate an active and visible role for advocates for seniors at this Conference because many of the issues that will be discussed have a disproportionate impact on our older population.

healthy aging We have appreciated the opportunity to work with Rep. McGovern's office on H.R. 2297 and now believe it is time for the House and Senate to pass the measure and get it to the President.

NANASP's Mission is to Thank you.

strengthen through advocacy and education Keith Schildt, PhD
President
NANASP

Bob Blancato
ED

those who help older Americans

LETTER FROM MR. BILL AYRES, CO-FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WORLD HUNGER YEAR, INC. TO MR. KEITH L. STERN, SUBCOMMITTEE STAFF DIRECTOR, DATED MAY 15, 2009.



World Hunger Year, Inc.
505 Eighth Ave., Suite 2100
New York, NY 10018
212 629 8850 phone
212 665 9274 fax

whyhunger.org

May 15, 2009

CHAIR
Charles J. Sanders

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AND CO-FOUNDER**
Bill Ayres

VICE CHAIR
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SECRETARY
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Harry Chapin
1962-1981

CHAIR EMERITUS
James R. Chapin
1961-2002

Established 1975

Keith L. Stern
Rules Associate
Office of U.S. Representative James P. McGovern
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-6101
Mobile: (202) 306-3869
Fax: (202) 225-5759
keith.stern@mail.house.gov
<http://mcgovern.house.gov>

Dear Keith,

Please be advised that WHY supports HR 2297.

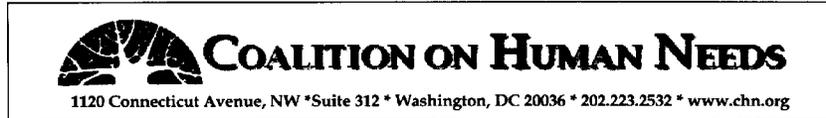
It is crucial that there be a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition to help develop plans to end hunger in America and to reduce the numbers of people who suffer from obesity and diet related diseases.

WHY will be happy to participate in the planning and in the event.

Sincerely,

Bill Ayres
Co-Founder and Executive Director

LETTER FROM MS. DEBORAH WEINSTEIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE COALITION ON
HUMAN NEEDS, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 18, 2009.



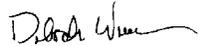
May 18, 2009

The Honorable James McGovern
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative McGovern,

The Coalition on Human Needs wishes to convey its strong support for holding a White House level conference to bring national attention to the urgent need to eliminate hunger in the United States. We thank you for your leadership in sponsoring The White House Conference on Food and Nutrition, H.R. 2297. With 36.2 million people living in households considered to be food insecure, the conference can help educate the public and policy makers about the need for immediate action, and to show that ending hunger in this wealthy nation is well within our grasp.

Sincerely,



Deborah Weinstein
Executive Director

LETTER FROM MS. PAMELA BAILY, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF GROCERY MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY 18, 2009.



The Honorable James P. McGovern
United States House of Representatives
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-2103

May 18, 2009

Dear Congressman McGovern,

The Grocery Manufacturers Association applauds the introduction of your "White House Conference on Food and Nutrition" bill as a step in the right direction to ending hunger and poverty in the United States. GMA supports having an open dialogue on how to deal with hunger and this conference will encourage the development of real life, plausible solutions.

Next year marks the 40th anniversary of the first White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health. President Nixon called for the conference saying, "The moment is at hand to put an end to hunger in America itself. For all time." Although President Nixon's goal of ending hunger in America has not yet been realized, significant strides to alleviate hunger have been made.

Now, nearly four decades later, Representative James McGovern (D-MA) has introduced a bill calling for a New White House Conference on Food and Nutrition and The Grocery Manufacturers Association is happy to announce its support of this bipartisan effort to further explore ways to end hunger

GMA is pleased that you have taken the initiative to make these important issues a priority and looks forward to working with you as an active partner in the fight against hunger in the United States and globally.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pamela Bailey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pamela Bailey
President and CEO
Grocery Manufacturers Association

GROCERY MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

1350 I Street, NW :: Suite 300 :: Washington, DC 20005 :: ph 202-639-5900 :: fx 202-639-5932 :: www.gmaonline.org

LETTER FROM DR. H. ERIC SCHOCKMAN, PRESIDENT OF MAZON: A JEWISH RESPONSE
TO HUNGER, DATED MAY 18, 2009.



10495 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 100
Los Angeles, CA 90025
Tel 310.442.0020 Fax 310.442.0030
mazon.org mazonmail@mazon.org

May 18, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter signifies MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger's full endorsement of HR 1869 and HR 2297.

MAZON is a national, nonprofit agency that allocates donations from the Jewish community to prevent and alleviate hunger among people of all faiths and backgrounds. Both Bills will support those we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "H. Eric Schockman".

H. Eric Schockman, Ph.D.
President

LETTER FROM MR. ROGER JOHNSON, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL FARMERS UNION,
TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN AND JO ANN EMERSON, DATED MAY 18, 2009.



May 18, 2009

The Honorable James P. McGovern
United States House of Representatives
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jo Ann Emerson
United States House of Representatives
2440 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative McGovern and Representative Emerson:

On behalf of the family farmer, rancher and rural resident members of National Farmers Union, I write to commend you for introducing the White House Conference on Food and Nutrition (H.R. 1869 and H.R. 2297).

American farmers and ranchers produce a safe, affordable and plentiful food supply that is unparalleled. Despite this abundance of food, hunger and food insecurity still exists in this country and around the world. Programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and school feeding programs have had great success in reaching the neediest Americans; however, hunger and poor health associated with undernourishment continue to be chronic problems. If we are serious about ending hunger in America, the root causes of food insecurity must be assessed, and a plan must be developed to ensure all Americans have access to foods that are both affordable and healthy.

Convening a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition, which will bring together a broad range of stakeholders, is an important step to achieving the goal of eliminating hunger and food insecurity. I am confident that American agriculture can be a part of the solution to hunger, but only by working together can we, as a nation, bring about real change.

I thank you for introducing this important legislation, and look forward to working with you to ensure its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Johnson".

Roger Johnson, President
National Farmers Union

LETTER FROM MS. KELLY D. JOHNSTON, VICE PRESIDENT GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS OF
CAMPBELL SOUP COMPANY, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN, DATED MAY
21, 2009.

Kelly D. Johnston
VICE PRESIDENT GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
Telephone: (856-968-4367)
Fax: (856-342-3889)
Kelly_Johnston@campbellsoup.com

MAY 20 2009



Campbell Soup Company
1 Campbell Place
Camden, NJ 08103

May 21, 2009

The Honorable Jim McGovern
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman:

Congratulations on the Rules Committee hearing that you held recently on HR 2297, which would require the President to call a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. As you noted, it has been over 40 years since such a conference has been held, yet hunger and nutrition in America remain a top issue for many Americans.

While we did not have the opportunity to testify at your hearing, I wanted to let you know about Campbell's work to improve the health and wellness of our consumers, as well as our long standing commitment to address hunger. Page 38 of the attached 2008 Campbell Corporate Social Responsibility Report – our first – outlines our contributions to address hunger, including:

- In May 2008, about 230,000 members of the National Association of Letter Carriers collected 73.1 million pounds of food that helped to restock food banks across the US through the Campbell-sponsored "Stamp Out Hunger" campaign. We just completed the 2009 campaign and hope to have results of that effort soon.
- Over the past 10 football seasons, Campbell has partnered with the National Football League by donating soup on behalf of the Chunky Tackling Hunger campaign, also to help food banks. In 2007, we donated more than 2 million cans.
- Pepperidge Farm, a Campbell subsidiary, donates tons of surplus bakery and snack products from our plants and thrift stores to Feeding America food banks and other food collection agencies.

You also should know that despite these efforts, some states, particularly in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, are considering legislation that would prohibit the sale of food past their "sell by" dates. Such legislation to prohibit the sale of otherwise safe, wholesome food would deny our hungriest citizens access to affordable or free food products at a time when they are needed most. We encourage you to speak out against such legislative efforts.

Thank you for your continued leadership to address food and nutrition issues. We are at your service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelly D. Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Enclosure: "Nourishing People's Lives," 2008 Corporate Social Responsibility Report

LETTER FROM MR. PAUL DOWNEY, PRESIDENT OF THE CALIFORNIA NUTRITION COALITION, TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON RULES AND ORGANIZATION OF THE HOUSE.

California Nutrition Coalition

"Because It's More Than a Meal"

TO: THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON RULES AND ORGANIZATION OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Chairman and Members

CNC, the California Nutrition Coalition, unequivocally supports H.R. 2297. This legislation sponsored by Representative Jim McGovern requires the President to convene a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. Four decades have passed since the last White House Conference on this subject was held. Our country is overdue for the type of policy discussions and plans of action that come from these seminal events.

CNC is a membership organization for community-based food and nutrition programs in California. These programs provide valuable food and nutritional services to the elderly and to individuals with terminal illnesses. In California alone, over 22,000,000 life sustaining, healthful meals are served annually – many of these meals are served to frail, homebound individuals. Alleviating hunger, food insecurity, and malnourishment are the cornerstones of our members' work in California. This work is duplicated across the country and is an important component of a proactive healthcare system.

A White House Conference on Food and Nutrition will provide the foundation for future policy decisions addressing the root causes of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, which is a growing intergenerational crisis in our nation. The rich dialogue that occurs at such a conference will help prioritize issues, identify possible solution streams, and greater highlight the need for innovative responses to these issues.

There are a wide range of issues which should be dealt with at a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition relating to hunger, malnutrition, and their impact on health care. Special attention should be paid to innovative programs from the public, nonprofit and private sectors, which are helping to address the nutritional needs of our nation. Lastly, this Conference can help identify a more active and coordinated role for the federal government to oversee our nation's response to hunger and the nutritional needs of vulnerable Americans.

CNC is confident that this White House Conference will provide sufficient attention to the special impact that hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition have on our nation's vulnerable populations; especially older Americans and individuals dealing with terminal illnesses. Delegates to this Conference must include representatives from those programs that deal with these issues on a daily basis. Those closest to the problem are valuable attendees and their advocacy voice will ensure that the attention, discourse, and solutions ultimately resulting from the Conference are grounded in successful, knowledgeable practice.

We look forward to working with our California Congressional delegation in seeing this important measure passed and sent to the President for action.

Thank you

Paul Downey
President

LETTER FROM MR. EDWARD M. COONEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE
CONGRESSIONAL HUNGER CENTER.



Congressional Hunger Center

"Fighting Hunger by Developing Leaders"

Honorable Jo Ann Emerson
Member of Congress
CHC Board Co-Chair

Honorable James R. McGovern
Member of Congress
CHC Board Co-Chair

Honorable Byron Dorgan
Member of Congress

Honorable Dennis Hastert
Member of Congress (Retired)
Attorney at Law
The Lorington Group, L.L.P.

Honorable Shalla Jacobs Lee
Member of Congress

Ashley Anderson
Executive Director
Children's Nutrition Program of Haiti

David Beckmann
President
Bread for the World

Cal Dooley
President and CEO
CMA

Karen Cahle Edwards
Principal
KCBS Public Affairs Associates

Elizabeth Emerson-Lopez
President
The Logan Company, Inc.

Vicki B. Secare
President and CEO
America's Second Harvest
The Nation's Food Bank Network

Brian Falkner
VP, U.S. Government Affairs
Kraft Foods

Al Frenham
Author/Consultant

Lois Gerber
Legislative Director
Communications Workers of America

David Kantor
President
Vince Wholesale Group

Marshall Metz
Partner
Olson, Frank and Woods, P.C.

Neahy Mulvan
President
The Mulvan Advisory Group, L.L.C.

John R. Sander
U.S. Department of State (Retired)
Management Consultant

Jim Schylbet
Instructor
Hemline University

Mary Catherine Tolak
VP, Government Relations
General Mills, Inc.

Edward M. Cooney, J.D.
Executive Director

Dr. Margaret M. Zeitler
Deputy Director

Ambassador Tony F. Hall
Founder

Ambassador Arthur E. (Gene) Dewey
Founding Director

In Memory Of:
Honorable Bill Emerson
Honorable Mickey Ladd

The exempt 501 (c) (3) organization

The Congressional Hunger Center strongly supports HR 1869 and HR 2297, legislation that calls for a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. The 1969 White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health led to the elimination of the purchase requirement in the Food Stamp Program which had limited the participation of 50 % of low income Americans. It also led to the creation and expansion of the WIC program and the establishment of Dietary Goals for American that have advanced the nutrition and health status of the US population.

A White House Conference will help focus policy makers at the local, state regional and national level on the need to make federal nutrition programs available to all that need them and ways to address childhood obesity. Making healthy foods available and affordable to low income consumers should be an important and achievable goal.

Edward M Cooney

LETTER FROM THE HONORABLE DAN GLICKMAN, FORMER SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE AND FORMER MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM KANSAS, TO REPRESENTATIVE JAMES MCGOVERN.

To: Honorable Jim McGovern

Dear Jim:

The purpose of this letter is to give my full personal endorsement for your legislation to establish a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition.

I believe such a Conference will highlight the very serious, and worsening, conditions in this country affecting the diets and nutrition of millions of Americans who suffer from a variety of nutritional problems largely associated with historic and current economic problems. Previous White House efforts were the catalyst for changes and improvements in a whole litany of federal nutritional programs and a renewed effort is critically important in focusing national attention on these problems with the goal of structural changes at the federal and state levels to alleviate hunger, poverty and malnutrition.

As the former Secretary of Agriculture during the Clinton Administration, and working with the Congress on a bi-partisan basis, I know first hand how critical these federal programs are and how they positively impact the lives of millions of people on a daily basis. But there have been so many changes in the demographics and structure of the American economy over the past 30 years, as well as the science of nutrition itself, that a renewed effort is necessary to keep these programs modern, vital and relevant, and to examine whether new ways of assisting a hungry population are needed. I happen to believe that efforts such as the Food Stamp program, the WIC programs, the national school lunch program, and many others, have been some of the most successful social service efforts ever enacted by the US Government, that they have improved and saved tens if not hundreds of thousands of lives, and I hope they continue. But I also know that a fresh, comprehensive review of the needs of our most vulnerable population, by a diverse group of Americans with different experiences, is periodically necessary to honor our obligations to those vulnerable people, and to help them extricate themselves from poverty as well. A White House Conference is in my judgment desperately important to accomplish these goals during these tough times.

Thanks for your leadership and commitment to America's hungry.

Dan Glickman

Secretary of Agriculture (1995-2001)

Member of Congress from Kansas (1977-1995)

THE WASHINGTON TIMES, OP-ED BY GEORGE MCGOVERN AND BOB DOLE, ENTITLED
"OBESITY CONFERENCE CALL," MARCH 27, 2009.

The Washington Times

 Print  Close

Friday, March 27, 2009

Obesity conference call

George McGovern and Bob Dole

During the course of our careers, we have reached across partisan lines and teamed up to address national nutrition issues. In the wake of President Nixon's 1969 White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health, we worked together to focus the nation on the issue of hunger in America and successfully sponsored a series of legislative initiatives improving food stamps and school nutrition programs and established the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) program.

We then turned our attention to the relationship between diet and disease. The Senate Select Committee on Nutrition, under our leadership, published Dietary Goals for the United States to highlight the relationship between fat consumption and heart disease, between sodium and hypertension and other high-risk diets.

Today, we are joining forces to suggest a national effort to combat obesity, the nation's No. 1 public health problem. The reason, of course, is self-evident. Americans are gaining weight at an alarming rate. Children are eating more, exercising less and becoming diabetic. Obesity is having a profound effect on our health and our national economy.

The relationship between diet and disease is a complicated science. The obesity equation, however, as opposed to the relationship between diet and specific diseases, is simple math, well within our grasp. It boils down to this: If you consume more calories than you burn, you will gain weight. Conversely, if you use more calories than you consume, you will lose weight.

A major new study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* emphasizes this exact point. "Reduced-calorie diets result in clinically meaningful weight loss regardless of which macronutrients they emphasize."

In short, if weight loss is the goal, total calorie consumption is the key. There are no good foods or bad foods when it comes to weight loss, only high-calorie and low-calorie foods.

A soda, as one example, contains 140 calories. If you consume an extra 140 calories and don't want to gain weight, you must burn off those calories.

Walking a mile uses up about 100 calories. As we all spend more time at a computer, we must “budget” our calories more efficiently.

President Obama has set a good example for all of us in this regard. Even during the pressure of the presidential campaign, he ate a healthy diet and was committed to exercise. (Perhaps if we had followed our own dietary advice during our respective presidential bids, we might have been more successful.) The first lady also is promoting healthy eating and exercise. In Tom Vilsack, we have a secretary of agriculture who will work closely with the president’s primary health team on the challenge that lies ahead.

While it is not the government’s role to tell people what to eat, the government has an important role to play by providing basic information. Individuals will need to do their part and the business community will need to contribute to the education campaign, but nothing can replace attention from the top to get the national effort moving.

We, therefore, urge Mr. Obama to convene a second White House Conference on Nutrition. This conference would focus on obesity, the other face of malnutrition. While it would be up to the participants at the conference to craft a plan of action, the following ideas have been mentioned and may be worthy of consideration:

- c All foods and beverages sold on the school campus during the school day should consistent with Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Currently, only foods that are included in the school meal must comply.

- c Integrate nutrition education into all federal nutrition programs.

- c Encourage use of “obesity” computers in school cafeterias and supermarkets, along with Web sites, so students and customers can plug in a food, find out the number of calories in the food, and then be told the various options for burning off that amount of calories.

- c Let’s re-examine the food label with an eye to making the best use of its limited space and include alcohol beverages.

- c Implement a national public information campaign on “obesity mathematics” connecting calorie consumption to physical activity.

All of this and more should be considered. We need to budget our calories as if they were dollars, or even better than dollars, because there is no credit card for calories. It is all about calories, and we need a national nutrition education program for all Americans to learn the obesity math.

A White House Conference could bring together all the stakeholders, federal, state and local officials with the private sector, public interest

organizations and experts on communication.

We all know there is a problem. We don't have to prove there is an obesity problem. We need to bring all parties together to establish an action plan (without government mandates) and get the job done.

George McGovern is the former senator from South Dakota and the 1972 Democratic presidential nominee. Bob Dole is the former senator from Kansas and the 1996 Republican presidential nominee.