

# **The Stop Child Summer Hunger Act**

## **Introduced by Senator Patty Murray**

"Only a small fraction of low-income children who receive lunch assistance during the school year receive food assistance through a summer feeding program, in part because the current one-size fits all approach does not work in every community. Communities should have the option to employ models that will best reach hungry children, and we applaud Senator Murray for introducing this important legislation to give states more flexibility. "

- *Bob Aiken, CEO, Feeding America*

"We thank Senator Murray for her leadership in introducing the Stop Child Summer Hunger Act. We are pleased to support this critical legislation to ensure that homeless children and youth do not lose access to healthy foods when they are out of school for the summer."

- *Maria Foscarinis, Executive Director of the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty*

"As a society we are committed to the moral idea that all students should be able to focus on their studies, not their empty stomachs. But hunger does not take a summer vacation. No child should spend the summer months struggling against the pains of hunger that afflict too many in the most prosperous nation on earth."

- *Rabbi David Saperstein, Director of the Religious Action Center*

"Many children look forward to the summer break from school. However, far too many children dread facing summer's long days without school breakfast and lunch. Summer for these children doesn't mean fun and recreation; it means hunger. The Stop Child Summer Hunger Act is a common-sense and simple approach to making sure that no child has to dread the summer break due to hunger. On behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), we urge Congress to pass this legislation so that no child goes hungry this summer."

- *The Reverend Stacy Martin, Director of Advocacy, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

"Pediatricians understand firsthand that childhood food insecurity and malnutrition are associated with poorer overall health, repeated hospitalizations, worse school achievement, higher rates of anxiety and depression, and behavior problems. The Stop Child Summer Hunger Act will help reduce child hunger by enabling their families to replace meals during the summer months that their children would otherwise be receiving at school through the free- and reduced-lunch program. The American Academy of Pediatrics proudly endorses this legislation and commends Senator Murray for its introduction."

- *James M. Perrin, MD, FAAP, President, American Academy of Pediatrics*

In the richest nation on earth, our children should not go hungry! For low-income families, summertime is often the most difficult for feeding their growing children. This proposal is a simple AND effective way to get food to hungry children. It gives parents the ability to select

good food for their children by giving them an electronic benefit card that they can use throughout the summer. This is a smart way forward to ensure that our children are nourished and cared for.

- *Sister Simone Campbell, Executive Director, NETWORK,  
A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby*

“It’s irrefutable that children need nutritious food 12 months of the year, but during the summer months, children in low-income families too often go without proper nutrition. Senator Murray’s bill to help parents buy food for their children to compensate for the loss of school meals is a very important part of the solution to an urgent problem. The Stop Child Summer Hunger Act of 2014 has its priorities straight. We cannot afford to continue billions of dollars in tax loopholes that encourage U.S. companies to move jobs and income offshore while denying our poorest children nourishing food. Thanks to Senator Murray for introducing responsible legislation to help children grow today and help the economy grow now and in the future.”

- *Deborah Weinstein, Executive Director, Coalition on Human Needs*

"Science tells us that nutrition deficiencies can have long term implications that affect a child’s life and ability to succeed. Nutritional needs don’t abide by vacation days. Our nation’s neediest children need to be healthy and ready for life 12 months out of the year not 10 months. The Stop Child Summer Hunger Act of 2014 is a practical solution to reducing child hunger during summers and school vacations. Let’s make sure our most vulnerable get the nutritional support they need year around."

- *Irwin Redlener, MD, President and Co-Founder, Children's Health Fund, Director, Program  
on Child Well-Being and Resilience, Professor of Pediatrics,  
The Earth Institute at Columbia University*

“Strengthening the summer food program is crucial to ensuring that low-income children get the nutrition they need when school is out and they lose access to meals at school. Good nutrition is key to helping students return to the classroom in the fall ready to learn.”

- *Mary Kusler, Director of Government Relations, National Education Association*

“Kids can’t send hunger on summer vacation, so the Stop Child Summer Hunger Act responds to an urgent need with a common-sense response. We urge senators to support this common-sense plan to reduce childhood hunger.”

- *Bruce Lesley, President, First Focus Campaign for Children*

“Senator Murray’s ‘Stop Child Summer Hunger Act’ is a much needed step forward to end intolerable child hunger in the richest nation in the world. With the last days of school fast approaching, many children on summer break will be left without the breakfasts and lunches that sustain them during the school year. Only 11 percent of 21 million, the number of children who benefit from the National School Lunch Program, participate in the Summer Feeding Program.

Hunger doesn't take a summer vacation. While we are fixing barriers to the national summer feeding program we must help families feed their children. The Stop Child Summer Hunger Act does that."

*- Marian Wright Edelman, President of the Children's Defense Fund*

"The summer months can be the hungriest time of year for kids. The federal summer meals program is designed to make sure children get the food they need during the summer months, but only a fraction of the kids who need these meals are getting them. We support efforts to modernize this important program so it is able to efficiently feed all children who struggle with hunger, no matter where they live."

*- Share Our Strength*