
**THE COALITION IN SUPPORT OF THE
GEORGE MCGOVERN-ROBERT DOLE
INTERNATIONAL FOOD FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM**

February 08, 2008

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition and Forestry
328A Senate Russell Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Saxby Chambliss
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition and Forestry
328A Senate Russell Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Chairman
House Committee on Agriculture
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte
Ranking Member
House Committee on Agriculture
1305 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chairman
Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Rangel
Chairman
House Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable James McCrery
Ranking Member
House Committee on Ways and Means
1139 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Harkin, Peterson, Baucus, and Rangel and Ranking Members Chambliss, Goodlatte, Grassley and McCrery:

As you prepare for Conference negotiations on the Farm Bill, we respectfully request that you adopt the House-passed provision that provides mandatory funding for the George McGovern-Robert Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program. The House-passed provision will restore funding to \$300 million, the amount provided when the Program was launched. Mandatory funding will strengthen the ability of USDA to carry out long-term planning, increase local capacity-building and enhance sustainability. We believe that providing food to malnourished children in schools is one of the most effective tools in the fight against hunger and poverty.

The McGovern-Dole Program has established a track record of fighting hunger and promoting education by providing food to chronically hungry children in schools in the world's poorest countries. In

countries where school feeding programs are offered, enrollment and attendance rates increase significantly, especially for girls. Providing food at school is a simple but effective method to increase enrollment rates, improve literacy, and help break the cycle of poverty.

In addition to fighting hunger and promoting education, the McGovern-Dole Program has been the catalyst in furthering other essential interventions. These interventions benefit the increased number of children attending school and include de-worming treatment and education about HIV/AIDS prevention. The UN Millennium Project has referred to school feeding as one of the “quick wins” that can help to address a range of critical problems facing children in the world’s poorest countries.

The McGovern-Dole Program demonstrates America’s generosity and goodwill. It also promotes U.S. national security interests by offering an alternative to children who may otherwise be susceptible to recruitment by groups that provide meals in return for attendance at extremist schools that serve as a breeding ground for terrorists.

In 2006, the Program distributed more than 80,000 metric tons of U.S. commodities including wheat, wheat flour, corn, cornmeal, corn soya blend, rice, lentils, dry beans and vegetable oil. In addition to U.S. farmers, the Program benefits a range of related industries, such as packagers, freight forwarders and shippers, as well as U.S. port facilities.

Although the Program has proven to be effective and has built a wide base of bipartisan support in Congress, the capacity exists to do more. Under current funding, the Program reaches approximately 3 million of the world’s 110 million chronically hungry school-aged children. With support from other countries, the international community is able to reach an additional 15 million students a year.

There is no better representation of American ideals and values than the George McGovern-Robert Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program. Please assist us in continuing to deliver food and educational opportunities to many deserving children around the world.

Sincerely,

Alliance to End Hunger
America’s Second Harvest
American Soybean Association
Better World Campaign
Bread for the World
Chocolate Manufacturers Association
Congressional Hunger Center
Education Africa USA
Friends of the World Food Program
Global Food & Nutrition Inc.
The Humpty Dumpty Institute
Islamic Relief

International Orthodox Christian Charities
LIFE for Relief and Development
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
National Oilseed Processors Association
North American Millers’ Association
School Nutrition Association
Share Our Strength
United Nations Association of the USA
US Dry Bean Council
USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council
US Fund for UNICEF
World Hunger Year

