

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 30, 2008

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture,  
Nutrition, and Forestry  
United States Senate

The Honorable Saxby Chambliss  
Ranking Member, Committee on Agriculture,  
Nutrition, and Forestry  
United States Senate

The Honorable Collin Peterson  
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte  
Ranking Member, Committee on Agriculture  
United States House of Representatives

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members:

As the Conference Committee continues negotiations on the 2007 Farm Bill, we write to emphasize the critical need to increase investments in federal nutrition programs and to produce the strongest possible nutrition title. This is a concern we know you share. Through a strong nutrition title, Congress has the opportunity to strengthen the economic security of low-income Americans by assisting them with putting food on their tables while also working to improve their health by providing nutritious food options and programs aimed at the adoption of healthy eating habits. This is an important factor for us in analyzing a final Farm Bill agreement.

We urge you to develop a final bill that both retains the strength of the Senate's nutrition title provisions and the structure of the House title which makes permanent improvements to Food Stamps and the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). Such an approach provides for a strong level of funding for these key nutrition programs, while also including the critical improvements to nutrition programs provided for in the Senate version of this title.

Unless the final farm bill adopts the House approach, all the major benefit improvements included in the nutrition title would end after 2012, and policies would return to current law. Unless Congress later took action to extend the policies, more than 10 million recipients would experience benefit cuts and over 300,000 low-income people would be cut off food stamps in 2013. The difficult fiscal outlook in the future certainly means there's no assurance that resources will be available to extend these provisions in 2013.

Nutrition remains an important priority for this Congress, and there is no better opportunity to strengthen nutrition policy and programs than the 2007 Farm Bill.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our request. We thank you for your continued leadership to craft a farm bill that protects and assists the most vulnerable of our society: children, seniors, and families who are food insecure. We appreciate your leadership and look forward to working with you. Should you or your staff have any questions, please contact Ms. Caryn Long of Senator Casey's staff at 224-7882 or Ms. Mayra Alvarez of Senator Durbin's staff at 228-5748.

Sincerely,

Bob Casey, Jr.

[Signature]

Dick Durbin

[Signature]

Barack Sanders

Carl Levin

John F. Kerry

[Signature]

Jay Rockefeller

[Signature]

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Ron Wyden

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Nun Fairclough

Dianne Feinstein

Frank R. Lautenberg

John Qued

Robert A. Mihaljicki

Edward M. Kennedy

Chuck Schumer

Jon Litz

Robert M. Menendez

Bill Nelson

Allyson

Daniel R. Akaka

Ben Cardin

Herb Kohl

Caro McCasill

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