



September 29, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: The HEROES Act Will Improve Food Access and Boost Our Nation's Economy

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy,

Share Our Strength affirms its support for the Heroes Act, a bill that will boost our nation's economy and provide support for the tens of millions of families facing unemployment, lost wages and hunger. Most importantly, it will ensure that the more than 14 million children who currently do not have enough to eat will have access to food where they live and learn.

In particular, we strongly support the following provisions in the HEROES Act:

- **Temporarily increasing the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) maximum benefit by 15% and minimum benefit to \$30 through September 2021.** A 15% increase in SNAP is equivalent to an additional \$25 a month per person to purchase groceries to feed a family. In a country where an estimated 14 million children are currently not getting enough food, with Black and Latino families disproportionately impacted, strengthening these benefits will significantly reduce hunger.

In addition to helping American families weather tough economic times, SNAP provides a boost to the nation's economy, which is why both Moody's Analytics and the CBO have said that, among possible policy responses to an impending recession, increasing SNAP benefits has one of the biggest "bangs for the buck" in terms of shoring up the economy. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service estimates that every \$1 billion invested in SNAP increases the GDP of the United States by \$1.54 billion by supporting 13,600 jobs and approximately \$32 million in farm revenue. By investing in SNAP, we can avert the risk of poverty and food insecurity among American families and children while improving our chances for an economic rebound.
- Funding for school and child nutrition program operators, which will sustain organizations that are struggling financially as a result of the new costs and challenges of reaching children with nutritious meals during the pandemic.



- Temporarily increasing WIC cash value vouchers to help more young children get the food they need because every child deserves a healthy start.
- Providing parity for the territories and Puerto Rico to ensure that all children in the U.S. will continue to have equitable access to nutrition regardless of where they live.
- Funding for FEMA and allowing for flexibility in the SNAP program that will allow SNAP participants to purchase low-cost hot meals at food retailers.

We know that COVID-19 will continue to impact communities around the nation, and we need to make sure that we are providing relief for families and for the supply chain that provides food to local grocery stores and school nutrition programs. This supply chain of farmers, food producers, truck drivers, grocery stores and school nutrition staff drive local economic activity in communities, creating new opportunities to help families rise out of economic hardship. By feeding families and children, nutrition programs also fuel a cycle of success, as nourished children experience improved academic performance and health outcomes.

The scope of this crisis is truly unprecedented. In order to prevent widespread increases in poverty and hunger, the crisis will demand a comparable response from the federal government. Congress must act now and pass the HEROES Act to support the nutritional needs of vulnerable families and children during this challenging time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa K. Davis".

Lisa Davis
Senior Vice President, No Kid Hungry Campaign