



Hunger Policy Updates & Alerts

Things are moving quickly in Congress and hungry kids need your voices NOW!

In just the past week, last Friday the House Agriculture Committee held a hearing here in Carnation on the Farm Bill ([video](#)). Huge thanks to all who attended and spoke up about strengthening SNAP and our food banks. On Wednesday, the House Education and Labor Committee marked up and passed the [Healthy Meals, Healthy Kids Act](#) ([hearing begins at 1:45 mark](#)). You'll hear more about this critical child nutrition reauthorization bill soon – see [here](#) for great info on what's included. Finally, on Thursday, the Senate released its budget reconciliation proposal, the [Inflation Reduction Act of 2022](#).

The Senate is poised to vote *next week* on this budget reconciliation bill, which includes important provisions on climate action, the economy, and health. **But what the bill does not include are the critical child nutrition provisions that we have been calling for over a year.** Summer EBT and access to free school meals have been *critical* to keeping hunger at bay during the pandemic for nearly one million kids in Washington – and millions more across the country.

As anti-hunger and nutrition advocates, we *know* that the evidence is clear that **food is medicine for growing children**. These nutrition programs have been mitigating the economic, educational, and health impacts of the pandemic, and we know these programs set up kids for better lifelong health and opportunity. For more background: [this report](#) shows the role of federal nutrition programs in improving kids' health; [this study](#) shows the critical role of Pandemic/Summer EBT in keeping child hunger in check during the worst of the pandemic.

But the Senate budget reconciliation bill isn't just about health: it's also about the economy. We know these programs generate significant positive economic impacts for local communities: Summer EBT has boosted sales and protected jobs at grocery stores and farmers markets across our state, and expanding free school meals ensured school districts had funding to retain staff jobs when schools have been struggling financially. For background on why Healthy School Meals for All can help with inflation, check out FRAC's [recent blog](#).

TAKE ACTION:

We need your voices to weigh in RIGHT NOW with Senators Murray and Cantwell!

Email:

Sen. Murray: <https://www.murray.senate.gov/write-to-patty/>

Sen. Cantwell: <https://www.cantwell.senate.gov/contact/email>

Call: Capitol Switchboard: (202) 224-3121

Tweet:

@PattyMurray
@SenatorCantwell

Ask them to include the following provisions in the final reconciliation bill before next week's vote:

Allow schools to continue offering free meals to all students through the 2022-2023 school year: As families are being squeezed by increased food costs, millions of children across the country are losing access to free school meals. This policy was included in the Support Kids Not Red Tape Act that was cosponsored by all Senate democrats.

Expand Community Eligibility for the 2023-2024 school year and beyond: Community Eligibility has transformed school breakfast and lunch for children, families, and schools, by allowing high-needs schools to offer free school meals for all students. With these provisions to increase reimbursement, make more schools eligible, and create a statewide option, *Washington could be able to offer free meals to all students!*

Create a Nationwide Summer EBT Program: When schools close for the summer break, millions of families lose access to school meals - food insecurity among families with children goes up. Sen. Murray is the lead sponsor on a bill to implement nationwide Summer EBT that provide families an EBT card to purchase food when schools are closed. This builds upon the success of the Pandemic EBT program, a strategy that has proved to reduce food insecurity and improve nutrition. In Washington, P-EBT provided approximately \$248 million in 2020 and 2021 to approximately 660,000 children statewide.

Zoom link for AHNC Membership meeting: Tues., August 9 (2:30-4pm)

Join us for our August AHNC membership meeting!

We haven't convened in a long time and there is a LOT to talk about -- Child Nutrition reauthorization, what's happening in your programs, meeting with Congress members during August recess, gearing up for back to school, and discussing priorities for the state legislative session.

It's a **lot** so we hope to see you there!

Meeting Details:

AHNC membership meeting
Tuesday, August 9
2:30-4pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82511165081?pwd=aWpLWE8rM3B6YUJ1czFhdUg3VDUzUT09>

Meeting ID: 825 1116 5081

Passcode: 265360

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