

## “For Such a Time as This” Pray. Fast. Act. PROTECT SCHOOL MEALS AND SNAP FUNDING

In the Large Catechism, Martin Luther explains that, “If you see anyone suffer hunger and do not feed [them], you have let [them] starve” ([LC III 190](#)).

In a nation of great wealth and resources, no child should ever go hungry. There are 42 million people in this country – 13 million of them children and over 5 million of them seniors – living in households struggling with hunger. Lack of access to nutritious food sets children apart at an early age, resulting in problems like lower test scores, decreased attention in the classroom and sickness. Childhood hunger also has life-long negative effects on a child’s development and growth that continue into adulthood. Access to consistent and nutritious meals gives children the fundamental and necessary elements needed to grow, learn, love and play.

Parents and educators are no stranger to all that’s needed to support young people in their development, and it all begins with good nutrition. For far too many children, a school meal might be the only food they receive in a day or is the only nutritious meal that they have access to day to day. This makes child nutrition programs critical, and they are increasingly threatened by tighter federal budgets and funding debates in Washington.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as Food Stamps) is one of the most effective government responses to economic downturns, such as the 2008 recession. SNAP benefits can be applied for quickly and be efficiently received to prevent a hunger gap when someone becomes unemployed or experiences unexpected economic hardship. Despite an improving economy, the need remains high. SNAP lifted 4.6 million Americans out of poverty in 2015, according to the Census Bureau’s Supplemental Poverty Measure.

Both the House of Representatives and the White House have offered proposals that would make drastic cuts to programs that feed poor and hungry children in our schools and provide food assistance to struggling working families. We call on Congress to:

### RETAIN THE COMMUNITY ELIGIBILITY PROVISION IN FY18

\$1.6 billion from the Community Eligibility Provision for school lunch and breakfasts in high-poverty schools affecting some 3.8 million students each year currently benefiting from the provision and preventing another 6.2 million students from access.

### OPPOSE TURNING SNAP INTO A BLOCK GRANT

Converting SNAP funding to a “block-grant” structure, which could mean an additional \$150 billion in cuts in the future.

### REJECT CUTS TO SNAP

\$10 billion in cuts over 10 years to SNAP, reducing food assistance to scores of children, low-wage working families, seniors and people with disabilities.

It is time for the administration and Congress to recommit our nation to one of its most important bi-partisan beliefs. We call on the administration and Congress to commit to ensuring that no one in this country will go hungry.

### LEARN MORE ABOUT...

U.S. Census Bureau: [“Income and Poverty in the United States: 2015”](#)

ELCA social statement: [“Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All”](#)

Food Action and Resource Center: [Statement on Budget Resolution Proposals](#)

