

MAYORS ALLIANCE LEADERS MEET WITH BIDEN-HARRIS ADMINISTRATION TO URGE EXTENSION OF USDA'S CHILD NUTRITION WAIVERS

On April 28, 2022, members of the Mayors Alliance to End Childhood Hunger and Lisa Davis, Senior Vice President of Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry Campaign, met with senior officials from the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, White House Office of Public Engagement, and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to discuss the importance of extending the USDA's Child Nutrition Waiver Authority. Schools and community organizations are facing snarled supply chains, soaring food price inflation and staffing shortages. Without the flexibility the waivers provide, many will have to scale back summer meal programs, making it harder for children across the country to access summer meals.

This impactful meeting was a result of Mayors Alliance Chair, Mayor Levar Stoney, Richmond, VA, and Vice-Chair, Mayor John Giles, Mesa, AZ, submitting a letter to the White House urging President Biden to prioritize working with Congress to extend USDA's authority to offer nationwide child nutrition program waivers. The Mayors Alliance also submitted a [letter](#) to Congress from 47 mayors from 30 states and Washington D.C., urging the extension of USDA's waiver authority. Mayor Paige Cagnetti, Scranton, PA, and Mayor Libby Schaaf, Oakland, CA also joined to share the harmful impact of the expiring waivers in their communities. Mayor Stoney kicked the meeting off by expressing that "childhood hunger is an epidemic in our country, and we urge the Biden-Harris Administration to take immediate action."

During the meeting, the mayors highlighted the significance of Child Nutrition Waivers and how they have been a lifeline to feed kids in ways that work best in their communities over the past two years of the pandemic. Mayor Cagnetti shared a story about the challenges facing many working families in the City of Scranton, the impact lack of waivers will have on access to summer meals and her belief that families should not struggle with finding the next meal for their children.

If Congress does not act, Child Nutrition Waivers will expire on June 30, 2022, increasing the risk of children losing access to an estimated 95 million meals this summer and many more next school year. Mayor Schaaf noted that a successful Oakland Unified School District home delivery program would not be able to operate this summer without USDA waivers. Furthermore, based on analysis conducted by No Kid Hungry's Center for Best Practices, the Mayor noted that 1,024 summer meal sites in California are unlikely to be eligible to serve meals to all kids in 2022, leaving about 738,000 kids without access to meals this summer. She shared that children and families experiencing transportation barriers would not have access to summer meals.

The White House and USDA were not optimistic that Congress will act in the short term but emphasized the important role and voice of mayors in driving change at the national level.

ABOUT THE MAYORS ALLIANCE

Launched in 2022, the Mayors Alliance to End Childhood Hunger harnesses the individual and collective leadership of mayors to end childhood hunger in communities nationwide. There is no excuse for children to go hungry in our country. Yet it happens – every day, in every community. The Mayors Alliance to End Childhood Hunger is a nonpartisan coalition working in partnership with Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry campaign to ensure that every child has the healthy food they need to thrive.