

September 2020

Pandemic Child Hunger Prevention Act

ACTION

The National Association of School Nurses (NASN) urges Congress to pass The Pandemic Child Hunger Prevention Act that would temporarily provide free meals for the 2020-2021 school year to ensure that all children have two meals, breakfast and lunch, a day. The Pandemic Child Hunger Prevention Act was introduced by Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA).

HISTORY

- School and school meals have been up ended from COVID 19 and The Pandemic Child Hunger Prevention Act would allow all children to access breakfast, lunch, and afterschool snack programs either in school or through “grab and go” and delivery options.
- Prior to the pandemic, many children already faced food insecurity. According to a Brookings Institute study, over 35 percent of households with children under 18 already were experiencing food insecurity in April. As the pandemic continues to cause widespread economic hardship, experts fear that the child hunger crisis could become even worse.
- With high unemployment numbers and uncertainty surrounding the school year, one in four children are expected to be food insecure due to the pandemic with Black and Hispanic households being hit hardest and are twice as likely to be food insecure compared to white families.
- The proposal would also eliminate paperwork for families and school officials, who would not have to fill out and process applications during a time of crisis.

BACKGROUND

- NASN supports ensuring no child face food insecurity.
- The pandemic has introduced economic uncertainty and volatility for families and children putting many more families than before eligible for free or reduced meals. This will guarantee that children do not fall through the cracks.
- Free school meals for all children removes the stigma of children participating in the program and provides equitable access to healthy meals ensuring that no child goes hungry.