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September 9, 2020

The Honorable Sonny Perdue  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

I write today to thank you for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) recent change to extend all school meal waivers through December 2020 and to urge you to take an additional step and extend those school meal flexibilities for the full 2020-2021 school year, using the authority granted under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).

I have heard from countless education leaders in my district about the critical need for students to continue having access to these school meals. Providing these waivers has helped our schools with the implementation of numerous summer programs including the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) and will continue to help throughout the school year and assist many of our schools with low-income students. These, and other meal program flexibilities, will allow meals to be served in all areas and ensure that children can continue to access meals under all circumstances.

[Reports show](#) that about eleven to twenty percent of adults with children reported that their children sometimes or often did not eat enough in the last seven days because they could not afford it. This means that as many as seventeen million children are not eating enough due to household affordability issues. If these meal waivers are not extended for the rest of the 2020-2021 school year, this concerning trend will continue and possibly grow.

It is my hope that you will take the next crucial step in keeping our students fed during the entire school year. I look forward to working with you and USDA to ensure that how children get their meals during the school year is not among the many other uncertainties they experience during the pandemic.

Sincerely,



Josh Harder

United States Representative (CA-10)