



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

October 21, 2020

Sonny Perdue
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Pam Miller
Administrator of Food and Nutrition Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
3101 Park Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22302

Brandon Lipps
Deputy Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services
U.S. Department of Agriculture
3101 Park Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22302

Dear Secretary Perdue, Administrator Miller, and Deputy Under Secretary Lipps:

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Financial Security and Poverty Taskforce writes to thank you for the continued extension of nationwide flexibilities¹ that allow free school meals for all children throughout the entire 2020-2021 school year under the authority of the recently passed Continuing Appropriations Act of 2021 (H.R. 8337). CCD is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

The extension of these flexibilities come at an important time as studies suggest that higher rates of households are saying they cannot provide enough food for everyone under their roofs since the pandemic began². Additionally, food insecurity rates are estimated to have tripled among households with children². This extension will ensure children, including those with disabilities, who rely on free and reduced-price school meals remain fed throughout the rest of the school year. We believe that one of the last things children and their families should need to worry about during a global pandemic is access to meals and nutrition assistance.

1 Trump Administration Extends Free Meals for Kids for Entire School Year | USDA-FNS. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/news-item/usda-040120>

2 Pro Analysis Food Insecurity During COVID. (2020 October). Retrieved from https://drive.google.com/file/d/1k2OH_FHJF3NGelgi4N5kvt6r28t9MfdL/view?usp=sharing

Again, we applaud the U.S. Department of Agriculture for taking this important step and utilizing flexibilities afforded under the continuing resolution to help ensure children, including those with disabilities, are fed during these unpredictable times. Please do not hesitate to contact Cyrus Huncharek (cyrus.huncharek@ndrn.org) with any questions.

Sincerely,

CCD Financial Security and Poverty Taskforce Co-chairs

Cyrus Huncharek
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)

Aaron Kaufman
The Jewish Federations of North America

Bethany Lilly
The Arc of the United States

Heather Sachs
National Down Syndrome Congress (NDSC)