

June 29, 2010

Committee on Education and Labor  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

The National Education Association, representing 3.2 million educators across the nation, would like to share with you the enclosed materials in advance of this week's hearing in the Committee on Education and Labor on H.R.5504, the Improving Nutrition for America's Children Act.

NEA members know first-hand that hungry children cannot learn, and that access to an adequate and healthy diet is essential to academic success. The clear link between good nutrition and learning is evident in classrooms across the nation every day. Yet, far too many children lack consistent access to an adequate, nutritious diet.

We hope Congress will craft a child nutrition reauthorization bill that:

- Provides increased resources for all school meals programs, given the link between good nutrition and academic success.
- Allows schools in high-poverty areas, and those designated as "low-performing" under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, to offer free meals to all students without collecting paper applications.
- Establishes national nutrition standards for all foods sold on the school campus throughout the day, such as those available in vending machines.
- Respects food service workers as skilled professionals with deep ties to the communities in which they work, including by providing training opportunities developed collaboratively with stakeholders.
- Rejects proposals to outsource school food service jobs.

Attached for your information and use are the following materials:

- A brochure highlighting how the important role of food service workers in ensuring students access to safe and nutritious meals, and in providing a basic component of student success—nutrition.
- A November 2009 article from NEA's flagship publication, *NEA Today*, on "Closing the Nutrition Gap." This article is also available at <http://www.nea.org/home/37100.htm>.
- A one-pager on the results of recent NEA focus groups on reducing childhood obesity.

We thank you for your attention to this important information.

Sincerely,



Kim Anderson  
Director of Government Relations



Mary Kusler  
Manager of Federal Advocacy