



breadfortheworld
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.

Preparing for Pushback

Your member of Congress and his or her staff are not expecting to meet with a policy expert today. They are meeting with you, their constituent, because they care about your concerns. If they ask any questions you can't answer, tell them a policy analyst with Bread for the World will follow up with any additional information or clarification they need.

Please remember to make any such notation on your congressional visit report form.

You should, however, anticipate some questions or comments as you make your views known on Capitol Hill. The following potential points of disagreement will help you prepare for your lobby visits.

1. There are hungry people in the U.S. Why should we spend taxpayer dollars on strengthening food and agriculture systems abroad?

- Globally, nearly 795 million people are hungry, and malnutrition causes approximately half of all deaths of children under age 5 (3.1 million children) each year. Hunger and malnutrition prevent millions of people in developing countries from living healthy, productive lives and stunt the mental and physical development of future generations.
- At less than 1% of the total federal budget, poverty-focused development assistance programs, including initiatives like Feed the Future, help to stabilize weak and fragile states, build economic prosperity by driving growth, and promote U.S. moral leadership around the world.

2. Why do we need to pass the Global Food Security Act now?

- The world's population continues to grow, requiring an increase in food production and efficiencies in food distribution by 2050. So there is urgent need for the U.S. to enact a comprehensive approach to global hunger and malnutrition, one that fully leverages all U.S. investments to achieve the greatest results.
- By continuing its global leadership through initiatives like Feed the Future, the U.S. will continue to contribute to the remarkable progress achieved in reducing hunger worldwide. In fact, the number of hungry people has declined from about 1 billion in 1990 to about 795 million today.
- Initiatives like Feed the Future are beginning to yield positive results, and by passing the Global Food Security Act, such legislation will ensure this comprehensive, whole-of-government strategy will continue beyond the current administration.

3. Why \$230 million?

- The World Bank and partners have recently released an analysis of the funding needed to make significant progress toward ending malnutrition. At minimum, an additional \$2.2 billion is needed each year for the next 10 years from all funding sources: donors, host governments, and households.
- \$230 million is a doubling of the nutrition funding level from the years 2015 and 2016. Doubling the U.S. contribution to the fight against malnutrition is a first step toward reaching the level of financing needed to end this preventable global scourge.

4. \$230 million is a lot higher than previous funding levels for global nutrition. Where do you suggest we take this additional funding from?

- Improving nutrition has major impacts on health, education, and economic growth. Nearly half of all deaths of children under age 5 (3.1 million children) each year are caused by malnutrition. Improving nutrition can improve results in other critical international development areas.

- Global nutrition constitutes approximately 4% of USAID's total global health spending, and is less than half of 1% of the U.S. government's international affairs budget. Considering the broader spending in global health and international affairs, \$230 million is a smart investment with a huge return.
- We strongly advocate for robust funding of all poverty-focused development assistance and ask that Congress use all available tools and resources to protect this funding.

5. Why do we need domestic child nutrition programs? Isn't it a parent's responsibility to feed their children?

- Parents do have the primary responsibility for feeding their children. But many children live in working-poor families in which the parents don't earn enough to pay for everything their family needs, such as rent, transportation, utilities, and even food. Some parents cannot work for a variety of reasons, such as a disability, or because they cannot find a job.
- National nutrition programs allow many parents to work full days without having to worry if their children will get nutritious meals. These programs provide food while children are away from home.
- The Bible shows over and over that God has a special concern for people who are hungry or poor. As people of faith in a wealthy country, we have a responsibility to ensure that children, who deserve protection and care from adults, have all of their needs met.

6. All these child nutrition programs just lead to overlap, duplication, and fraud.

- Child nutrition programs are targeted to reach children at different ages, locations, and time periods. School Lunch and Breakfast Programs serve meals at schools. The Summer Food Service Program helps children access meals and snacks during the summer months. The Child and Adult Care Food Program serves children in day care or in after-school programs. Finally, WIC assists low-income, women, infants, and children up to age 5. WIC provides foods that supply nutrients lacking in their diets, education on healthy eating, and even healthcare referrals. A pregnant mother or newborn's dietary needs are very different than a second grader's. It makes sense that these are separate programs administered differently.
- We agree that more should be done to improve error rates and even address the potential fraud in these programs. But efforts to do so must not make it more difficult for eligible children to participate in these programs.

7. Why oppose H.R.5003? Eligible children are not going to lose access to meals.

- H.R. 5003 makes a number of policy changes that would make it more difficult for children to access child nutrition programs. For example:
 - Changes to community eligibility would require at least 7,000 low-income schools with more than 3 million students to reinstate paper applications for school meal programs. This would result in fewer children being served as well as higher administrative costs for the impacted schools.
 - A school meal block grant proposal would cap funding for school lunch and breakfast programs. Block granting these programs would make them less responsive to sudden increases in need or the fluctuating costs of food.
- While the bill provides some funding for summer electronic benefits transfer (providing a debit-like card with funds for families to purchase groceries on their own), it would have an extremely limited impact. Funding would be capped at \$10 million per year, less than half of what is currently spent on summer EBT pilot projects. For every six low-income children who receive a school lunch, only one also gets a meal during the summer months. Congress must do more to help eligible children access summer meals.