

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION

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Chairperson

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Frances Chapman
Healthy Foods Advocate

Fern Gale Estro
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2 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Good

3 afternoon. I'm Council Member Helen Diane Foster,
4 chair of the Committee on State and Federal
5 Legislation. Today, we will be having a hearing
6 on Preconsidered Resolution 79-A, which has to do
7 with a resolution calling upon the United States
8 Congress to renew and strengthen the Child
9 Nutrition and WIC Nutrition Act. We have a number
10 of panels.

11 We've been joined by Council Member
12 Elizabeth Crowley from Queens. We will be having
13 members come in and out because there are other
14 delegation and committee meetings today.

15 That being said, we'll call the
16 first panel which consists of Joel Berg of the New
17 York Coalition Against Hunger, Kristen Mancinelli
18 from City Harvest, Aine Duggan and Stephanie
19 Gendell and Danielle Marchione of Citizens
20 Committee for Children. Are both of you
21 testifying? Just Stephanie is testifying. Thank
22 you.

23 JOEL BERG: Hello. I am Joel Berg.
24 I'm Executive Director of the New York City
25 Coalition Against Hunger.

2 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Before you get
3 started, I just want to let everyone know that the
4 Speaker will be coming up in a minute. When she
5 does, I might interrupt whomever is speaking, just
6 to acknowledge her and see if she has any opening
7 statements.

8 JOEL BERG: Sure. We always yield
9 for the speaker. Thank you, Chairwoman Foster for
10 your incredible leadership on this vital issue. I
11 handed in written testimony so I'll summarize the
12 main point. The main point really is that we need
13 Congress to step up with the bucks. As you know,
14 the city can't print money. The state can't print
15 money. Only the federal government can print
16 money.

17 The President has made a courageous
18 commitment to end child hunger by 2015 as a down
19 payment on ending all hunger in America. In the
20 richest country in the history of the planet,
21 there are tens of millions of American children,
22 including more than 400,000 in New York City alone
23 that live in households that cannot afford enough
24 food.

25 Saying we can end hunger without a

2 lot more federal spending is like saying we can
3 end drought without a lot more water. It is a
4 critical vital component. We believe that the
5 budget would take at least another \$4 billion a
6 year in federal spending, or about \$40 billion
7 over ten years to really place that serious down
8 payment on ending hunger among children entirely.
9 Combine that with the continuing food stamps
10 benefits and raised wages, because we do believe
11 that the single best solution to hunger is living
12 wage jobs for all Americans and all New Yorkers.

13 It would take, we really think, \$40
14 billion over ten years. The President very
15 responsibly proposed a billion dollars over ten
16 years. And he proposed ways to pay for it in his
17 budget. It is very disappointing that the version
18 that's now moved through the Senate Agriculture
19 Committee only has half of the president's
20 requests.

21 Mostly, in my judgment, because
22 certain entities don't want to take on
23 agribusinesses and somehow don't want to make the
24 billionaires pay their fair share. We've got to
25 pay for this somehow and I believe this society

2 has more than enough money to pay for it.

3 Child hunger costs this society
4 tens of billions of dollars a year and yet to say
5 we can fix it for a few billion dollars a year, if
6 there was a hole in our roof and a handy woman or
7 a handyman came to us and said the hole in your
8 roof is costing you \$30 a year and you can fix it
9 for \$4 or \$5, you'd certainly take the deal.

10 What would this money pay for?
11 First and foremost I would say it needs to pay for
12 universal in classroom school breakfast. More
13 than two-thirds of the children currently
14 receiving school lunches in New York City are not
15 getting school breakfast.

16 So it's great we've moved to
17 somewhat universal school breakfast. It's great
18 that there's been a very small pilot project in
19 New York City starting in a few schools to do
20 school breakfast in the first period classroom;
21 the vast majority of the 1,600 schools in New York
22 City are not providing breakfast in the classroom.

23 The mayor and the chancellor could
24 do this tomorrow on their own, but it would be a
25 lot easier to do and a lot better economic deal

1
2 for the city if federal law made sure there were
3 reimbursements for doing it and made sure there
4 was a lot less paperwork in doing it.

5 I'm about to release a paper in a
6 few weeks for the Center for American Progress in
7 Washington, D.C. Building on some of my amazing
8 work of many of my colleagues in this room, I
9 calculated that nationwide the paperwork alone
10 costs us about a billion dollars a year. Why
11 spend a billion dollars on paperwork to keep meals
12 away from low income children?

13 I'll just close by this. Sometimes
14 people who oppose spending resources on this say
15 well we have to choose between higher quality
16 meals or making sure more hungry children get
17 meals. We've been working very hard with my
18 colleagues in the alliance here to have a unified
19 stand that basically says we can and must do both.

20 We must ensure there's enough money
21 to ensure there are high quality meals and we must
22 have enough money to ensure more hungry children
23 have enough meals. There are now 56 billionaires
24 in New York City, surely we can ensure no child
25 goes hungry.

2 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.

3 We've just been joined by Speaker Quinn.

4 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you very
5 much, Chair Foster. I am not one of those 56
6 billionaires, in case anybody was confused.

7 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Not for lack
8 of trying, right?

9 SPEAKER QUINN: Right, exactly.
10 You can be heard all the way downstairs, Joel,
11 which is a good thing. So, one of the voices of
12 this issue is literally booming.

13 JOEL BERG: Madame Speaker, I know
14 you always hear me. I want to speak loud enough
15 so the other side of the hall hears me as well.

16 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you. That is
17 very kind. What we're here to be heard about and
18 here to discuss today are really two of the most
19 pervasive problems in the United States, hunger
20 and obesity. I don't have to tell this panel
21 that.

22 According to the United States
23 Department of Agriculture and this is a startling
24 number, approximately 12.6 million children live
25 in households facing a constant struggle against

2 hunger. So then add in the number of adults that
3 get included into that number. That happens while
4 childhood obesity has doubled here in New York
5 over the past 25 years and now accounts for \$242
6 million in statewide medical costs. Put that in
7 the context of the state budget discussions.

8 Now these are two sides of the very
9 same issues and ones that we've been working and
10 Council Member Crowley and Chair Foster have been
11 big parts of those efforts working very hard to
12 address.

13 They are problems, quite frankly,
14 that we can no longer continue to ignore. But
15 unlike so many other issues we face in this city
16 or world, some that there just aren't cures to.
17 Diseases you don't know how to cure. Problems you
18 don't know the answer to. This is not one of
19 them. If we decide we're going to, I believe we
20 can actually fix and solve both of these problems.

21 We can increase people's access to
22 quality affordable food in their neighborhoods and
23 we can decrease the availability and the
24 consumption of unhealthy fast foods.

25 Now one of the ways we can do that,

2 and absolutely not the only one, is the topic
3 we're talking about today, getting the Childhood
4 Nutrition Act renewal not just done but done
5 correctly. If we do it right, this will make a
6 huge difference in our ability to address this
7 issue.

8 The bill has gone through the
9 Agricultural Committee already and it so far
10 contains some good points but not good enough.
11 That's a direct certification of eligibility will
12 minimize the burden on working families and the
13 extension of the WIC program re-cert from six
14 months to a year. Those are good things.

15 And a \$50 million farm to school
16 grant program will help us better engage students
17 in the foods they eat and prepare them for a
18 lifetime of healthier habits. And like what
19 happens with a lot of other things, a lot of them
20 will go home and teach their parents what their
21 parents may not know.

22 That said, I and I think the
23 Council still have major concerns with the bill's
24 current form and would like to see some key
25 changes that will benefit students here in New

2 York City and I think in other cities across the
3 country.

4 First, the reauthorization should
5 increase the funding from \$450 million to a
6 billion dollars per year to match President
7 Obama's plan to eliminate child hunger by 2015.

8 Second, the bill needs to ensure
9 that the excellent snap education program is not
10 sacrificed in favor of other nutrition programs.
11 This is really important, particularly for all of
12 us. We also want to see the program directly
13 certify Medicaid recipients for free lunches
14 expanded to become a full program.

15 These and other critical
16 improvements are outlined in the resolution we are
17 hearing today and I want to thank Chair Foster for
18 moving on it quickly. I want to note that
19 Philadelphia, Chicago and Rochester have already
20 begun similar efforts at our urging to pass
21 resolutions in their city councils. We're trying
22 to get as many cities across the country to join
23 this campaign.

24 In addition, here in the Council
25 we've been doing outreach to get letters sent to

2 the President and to Congress. We started this
3 last week. We're already over 500 letters and
4 coming up on 600 letters. So I want to thank
5 everybody who has helped with that.

6 Again, I want to thank Chair Foster
7 and Council Members Arroyo, Palma, Recchia,
8 Jackson and Fidler who have worked on this
9 resolution. I want to thank our staff: Sarah
10 Brannen, Danielle Porcaro, Joe Mancino, Phil
11 Monaco, and Dave Pristin for their work. I want
12 to thank all of our partners in this, particular
13 Alliance for Child Nutrition Reauthorization as
14 well as Senator Kirsten Gillibrand who has really
15 been working very hard to try to get this issue
16 focused in the halls of Congress.

17 I just want to say, if we miss this
18 opportunity it could be a really long time before
19 we get another one and lots of children's health
20 will be lost in that period of time. So I want to
21 thank everybody's who is here today to send an
22 important message from New York and other urban
23 centers to Washington. Thank you, Madame Chair.

24 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you for
25 your leadership on this. We just finished hearing

2 Joel, so we can continue however you decide to go
3 next.

4 AINE DUGGAN: Good afternoon. I'm
5 Aine Duggan and represent the Food Bank for New
6 York City. I just want to thank the Council and
7 the Speaker and this committee in particular for
8 keeping the Child Nutrition Reauthorization bill
9 front and center for the city. Like Joel, I'm
10 just going to summarize the written testimony. If
11 I didn't know better I'd say the Speaker had just
12 read it because those are basically the same
13 points that we want to make.

14 It's all about the amount of
15 funding that's in the current proposals, the
16 inadequacy of that funding and also that it's
17 coming from the wrong place.

18 When we repeat the need, and I'm
19 sure several of us will, and we all have different
20 statistics, I don't think that it's a moot issue.
21 I mean, I think it's important for us to note that
22 27% of children in New York City are living in
23 poverty and that doing something about that and
24 making sure that they have access to food is
25 important for all of us to remember.

2 The one statistic that I quite like
3 to use is that the United States ranked 20th out
4 of 21 industrial nations in a 2007 Unicef study on
5 child wellbeing. So we certainly have a long way
6 to go.

7 The Child Nutrition Reauthorization
8 bill presents an opportunity to fix a number of
9 issues, including getting more healthy food to
10 children in need. It's been proven time and time
11 again, particularly by research done by the USDA
12 that when children have access to school meals
13 they do have access to more nutritious meals and
14 they are healthier as a result.

15 Notwithstanding all of the recent
16 media focus on school lunches not being healthy,
17 it should be noted that here in New York City,
18 school food has done an enormous amount of work to
19 increase the nutritious value of the food provided
20 in school meals. We still have a long way to go.
21 We have a long way to go in terms of giving kids
22 access to those meals, but we should note the
23 improvements that have happened.

24 For that reason, I really want to
25 focus on school lunch as being the most important

2 part of Child Nutrition Reauthorization. I think
3 we need to look at the way reimbursement works and
4 we need to look at the system that is put in place
5 around reimbursement. Just like the cost of food
6 increasing affects families and their ability to
7 put food on the table, it also affects school food
8 and other school districts around the country and
9 their ability to put nutritious food on the table.
10 So if we want them to continue the work that they
11 have been doing in improving the quality of the
12 food, we need to see reimbursement rates that
13 reflect the actual cost of the food.

14 Secondly, the system that's
15 currently in place for reimbursement, i.e. the
16 long application forms that have to be submitted
17 annually by parents, is an unnecessary burden on
18 the parents. It's an unnecessary burden on the
19 school system. I'm sure we'd all prefer to see
20 teachers and school administrative staff educating
21 our children rather than counting forms.

22 It's an unnecessary burden, if you
23 will, a clichéd, cruel and unusual punishment on
24 the very children that get excluded from school
25 meals because their parents haven't submitted the

2 forms or because they've submitted inaccurate
3 forms. So to that end, and I know that there is
4 some disagreement about the term that would be
5 used, whether we call it universal, whether we
6 call it alternative counting, whether we call it
7 direct certification, I think we can all agree
8 that the name doesn't matter.

9 We need a system that allows kids
10 to have access to lunch without filling in long
11 forms. So we would like to see, if nothing else,
12 that a universal meals pilot at least, if not full
13 program, come out of Child Nutrition
14 Reauthorization.

15 In order for it to happen, we need
16 to see more money going in to Child Nutrition
17 Reauthorization. I would say let's make it
18 simple. Instead of arguing about the numbers,
19 let's just take the 4.5 million, cross out the M
20 and put a B after it because we should be talking
21 about billions in order to pay for this thing.

22 On top of that, we need to look at
23 where the money is coming from. As the Speaker
24 mentioned, taking money out of SNAP-Ed and putting
25 it into Child Nutrition Reauthorization is the

2 cheekiest version of robbing Peter to pay Paul
3 that I have seen in public policy.

4 If we want to take it out of Ag,
5 and I'm not saying that we should, but to me it's
6 a little bit like watching a doctor do a skin
7 graft. They're not going to go for the leanest
8 part of the body; they're going to go for the
9 fleshy part. If we want the fleshy part of the Ag
10 budget, we need to go for Title 1 of the Farm
11 Bill. In that way we would kill two birds with
12 one stone.

13 We would reduce the amount of money
14 going into the production of high fructose corn
15 syrup infused foods that are targeted to low
16 income children and at the same time, we would
17 boost Child Nutrition Reauthorization. So if we
18 want to be strategic about it, there are better
19 ways to go.

20 We would like to see new money out
21 in the table and we'd like to see a universal
22 lunch. We totally support the Council's hearing
23 here today and Resolution 79. Thank you.

24 KRISTEN MANCINELLI: I worked
25 really long to get my oral testimony to three

2 minutes.

3 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Introduce
4 yourself for the record please.

5 KRISTEN MANCINELLI: Kristen
6 Mancinelli from City Harvest. So I'm just going
7 to read it as is. Good afternoon, Chairwoman
8 Foster and committee members.

9 SPEAKER QUINN: If I can interrupt,
10 I just want to take a second to congratulate City
11 Harvest not just on your hunger work but your
12 environmental work because you're probably the
13 greenest fleet of any fleet out there.

14 KRISTEN MANCINELLI: Thank you very
15 much. We did green our entire fleet of trucks.
16 Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak
17 today on behalf of City Harvest and the 85
18 organizational members of the New York City
19 Alliance for Child Nutrition Reauthorization.

20 As many of you know, City Harvest
21 rescues food that would otherwise go to waste and
22 delivers it to pantries and kitchens throughout
23 the five boroughs. Because meals at school and
24 child care are critical to the diets of many
25 thousands of kids fed by New York's emergency food

2 programs, City Harvest also works to promote and
3 expand the reach of the Child Nutrition programs.

4 We've done so this past year by
5 coordinating the New York City Alliance for CNR to
6 advocate for the city's children in this bill
7 currently moving through Congress. This alliance
8 was formed in part on a recommendation from the
9 Council in late 2008 when it was acknowledged that
10 the upcoming Child Nutrition Reauthorization was
11 an important and timely opportunity for the city
12 to meet the food needs of growing numbers of New
13 York families struggling in the midst of the
14 economic recession.

15 City Harvest reached out to a broad
16 range of partners, many of whom are here, and
17 solicited input for a common advocacy platform for
18 CNR around four goals: to end child hunger in food
19 and security, to ensure that all children have
20 access to nutritious foods, to reduce childhood
21 obesity and support regional farm and food
22 economies.

23 So we thank the Council for
24 encouraging this collaboration and appreciate the
25 work you've done this past year to raise the

2 profile of this bill and advocate for New York
3 City in this debate. Notably, for the resolution
4 you adopted last year and reintroduced this year.

5 We're especially grateful to
6 Speaker Quinn for holding a press conference on
7 CNR last August with Senator Gillibrand. At the
8 time, New York City had high hopes for the Child
9 Nutrition bill, calling for a 70 cent increase in
10 the reimbursement rate for school meals and an
11 extension of free meals to more children in areas
12 like New York City with a high cost of living,
13 among other provisions.

14 In this last year, the 85
15 organizations that make up the alliance have
16 supported these and other priorities by meeting
17 with members of Congress to provide input to the
18 reauthorization process and educating New Yorkers
19 new to this issue during more than 45 community
20 events, professional meetings and other activities
21 to create a broad base of advocates who will
22 continue to fight for the food needs of New York
23 City children even after CNR has passed.

24 But that moment has not yet come.
25 So what are we doing now? After a year of

2 advocacy with Congress we've heard time and again,
3 as my colleagues have mentioned, that our
4 priorities are very welcome but the challenge is
5 finding the money to make child nutrition programs
6 substantially better. So this group has set its
7 sites squarely on building the political will
8 necessary to make a significant investment of new
9 dollars in CNR.

10 In the last three months we've
11 gotten over 3,000 letters signed to key Congress
12 members with influence over the bill. We're
13 terribly disappointed with the bill that came out
14 of the Senate Agriculture Committee, with only
15 \$450 million a year, less than half of the one
16 billion called for by President Obama, and much
17 less than the \$4 billion New York City has called
18 for since the start of this debate.

19 The Senate version contains only a
20 six cent increase in the reimbursement rate.
21 Though it's much less than the 70 cents New York
22 City wanted, it still takes up a big portion of
23 the new money included, about \$3 billion of the
24 \$4.5 billion allocated to the bill over ten years.

25 Other essential changes needed to

2 expand access to meals for low income children
3 have not gotten even such a big share of the pie.
4 That's why it's critical that we keep pushing for
5 a bigger investment than Congress has so far made
6 in this bill.

7 We are continuing advocacy with
8 Senator Schumer's office to urge the Finance
9 Committee to invest more on the Senate side. Just
10 last week, the dedicated members of this alliance
11 secured the sign-on of every single representative
12 from New York City to a dear colleague letter
13 calling on the House leadership to secure full
14 funding for CNR.

15 So again, we thank the Council for
16 raising this issue to the forefront at a critical
17 time, just as the House of Representatives is
18 drafting their bill. We understand that the House
19 will introduce its bill in mid May and ask that
20 the Council continue to call on Congress to secure
21 substantial new funding for CNR of one billion
22 dollars at a minimum so that these vital programs
23 can better provide all kids with nutritious food.

24 Moreover, we call on Congress to
25 make sure the Child Nutrition bill goes before the

2 full Congress in both chambers for a vote in June.
3 Otherwise, we fear that the bill will be extended
4 another year. If that happens, not only will
5 children miss out on already overdue improvements
6 in this legislation, but there is considerable
7 concern that even the limited new funding
8 currently allocated to child nutrition will not be
9 available in the next fiscal year.

10 So before I end, I'd like to share
11 our hope. New York City is a recognized leader in
12 policies to improve nutrition and access to
13 healthy affordable food and as such can continue
14 to influence the national debate on these issues.
15 The city also is home to a large portion of
16 recipients of USDA food assistance benefits.

17 I hope the Council will see fit to
18 use this platform to continue to raise awareness
19 of the need for federal programs to better meet
20 the food needs of vulnerable New Yorkers and
21 consider holding a hearing early on in the farm
22 bill debates either this fall or early in 2011 to
23 hear New Yorker's priority for that valuable
24 legislation.

25 For now, we continue to focus on

2 Child Nutrition Reauthorization and ensuring that
3 New York City's children are well represented in
4 this process, urging Congress to take quick action
5 to reauthorize and fully fund the Child Nutrition
6 Act. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.

8 SPEAKER QUINN: I'm going to have
9 to run. Thank you all very much. Thank you
10 everybody.

11 STEPHANIE GENDELL: Good afternoon.
12 I'm Stephanie Gendell, Associate Executive
13 Director at Citizens Committee for Children. I
14 just wanted to thank the Speaker before she leaves
15 for her commitment to this issue and to the rest
16 of this committee, we're really grateful for your
17 attention to Child Nutrition Reauthorization as
18 well as other food-related issues to ensure
19 children have access to healthy and affordable
20 food.

21 As part of the Alliance for Child
22 Nutrition Reauthorization, I'm not going to
23 restate what my colleagues have already stated.
24 We obviously support and are advocating for \$4
25 billion more and for that money to come from the

2 right place.

3 I just wanted to throw out a couple
4 of statistics related to children and also add a
5 little bit about CACFP since that wasn't
6 mentioned, although we do support everything
7 stated about universal breakfast and lunch.

8 According to the Department of
9 Health and Mental Hygiene, nearly half of New York
10 City's elementary school children are either
11 overweight or obese and 27% of the kids in Head
12 Start programs are obese. In a national
13 comparison, New York has the 18th highest rate for
14 overweight and obesity in children and
15 adolescents. We need to do better for our kids
16 than that.

17 Our youngest New Yorkers are often
18 in city and state subsidized child care centers
19 for 8 to 10 hours a day. So what they eat there
20 will influence their lives for a very long time.
21 In fact, in childcare and Head State programs,
22 over 36 million meals are served each year. As
23 part of CNR, this reauthorization is also really
24 important and the funding for that.

25 Currently, kids in child care

2 centers, even if they're there for ten hours a
3 day, they can only have either two meals and one
4 snack or one meal and two snacks. So we're really
5 hopeful that if there is \$4 billion added they
6 could have a little more food the day because
7 that's a long time for a 3-year-old to go without
8 an additional snack or a meal.

9 So again, we thank you for your
10 commitment to this issue. We obviously support
11 the resolution and urge you to support the \$4
12 billion ask.

13 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you very
14 much. I just have a couple of quick questions.
15 Joel, when you were speaking of the school
16 breakfast, is the issue with providing school
17 breakfast in New York City the question of money,
18 or does it come to money and then the paperwork
19 and everything else?

20 JOEL BERG: It is all of those
21 things. It's also leadership. The Mayor did,
22 thankfully, announce about a year and a half ago
23 that he was going to expand the in-classroom
24 breakfast pilot project to a few hundred schools.
25 But the truth is, I think only a handful have the

2 breakfast in every single classroom.

3 The Department of Education has
4 basically made the voluntary, up to the
5 principals, based on the claim that the
6 Administration doesn't want to dictate to
7 principals how to run their schools. I'm
8 sympathetic to that philosophy but I guess I would
9 argue I'm not sure they've been consistent about
10 it.

11 When they Mayor wanted to end
12 social promotion, he didn't have a vote among
13 principals. When he wants to close down a school,
14 he didn't have a vote to see if the principals
15 want it.

16 So I think the School Food Services
17 has done an excellent job with the direction
18 they've gone. But you really need folks at the
19 top to understand this isn't just some namby pamby
20 sort of social work thing the do-gooders want to
21 throw in.

22 This is central to educational
23 performance. There is a boatload of evidence that
24 improving school nutrition dramatically and
25 immediately increases school performance. And I'm

2 not sure that message has been as universal from
3 the top on down.

4 So yes, having less paperwork from
5 the federal government would help. Having higher
6 reimbursement rates would help. But the City of
7 Newark just across the river from here, they did
8 it a few years ago in every single classroom of
9 every single school. There is no reason that New
10 York City couldn't do that tomorrow even without
11 this bill.

12 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: How does the
13 school breakfast program work, those that are in
14 fact working in the schools?

15 JOEL BERG: I want to be clear, and
16 some of my colleagues can talk to this. There is
17 school breakfast available in every public school
18 in New York City. But we're talking about in-
19 classroom breakfast. Where they don't have it in-
20 classroom, basically you have a separate lunchroom
21 and kids have to say I'm the poor kid, let me show
22 up separately.

23 In the in-classroom breakfast there
24 are basically three different models and we don't
25 say one size fits all. There's the model where

2 they actually bring the food into the classroom.
3 There's a separate model we call grab and go where
4 the food is actually in the hallway and the kids
5 literally grab it. For some classrooms with
6 younger kids or other issues where they may spill
7 the milk more, they actually take the classroom as
8 a whole to the lunch room to do it.

9 The key is every kid gets it
10 regardless of family income. We don't give
11 textbooks only to the poor kids and charge the
12 non-poor kids extra. It makes sense. It's
13 working in a lot of parts of the United States.

14 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Anybody can
15 jump in, is there a city that you can point to
16 that kind of has a model of how this in-classroom
17 breakfast works?

18 JOEL BERG: I would say Newark is
19 an excellent model. Also, the state of Michigan,
20 the superintendent of schools a few years ago did
21 a podcast and launched with the Dairy Council of
22 Michigan a statewide program to give awards to
23 schools that increased breakfast participation.

24 He said it's ridiculous that some
25 schools do this on test days because they know it

2 improves performance and they don't do it every
3 day.

4 AINE DUGGAN: The other important
5 factor to bear in mind is the relationship between
6 breakfast and lunch. I mean we have universal
7 breakfast in New York City. Yes, the time of day
8 that it's being provided is definitely a challenge
9 and certainly in-classroom breakfast and grab and
10 go do provide some relief.

11 But the other issue to bear in mind
12 is that the lunch system is a tiered system. So
13 we have free, reduced and full priced lunch. That
14 tiered system only serves to reinforce class
15 stigma. So that the kids who are actually
16 eligible for free, particularly in high schools,
17 don't actually want to avail themselves of it
18 because they don't want to be seen as the poor
19 kids.

20 That stigma is going to translate
21 over onto breakfast as well. So until such time
22 as the entire school meal system is universal,
23 we're going to see kids who are eligible for free
24 meals not availing themselves of the option.

25 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: In terms of

2 the paperwork, a part of me and I don't know if
3 this is my conspiracy theory thing, but a part of
4 me believes that the paperwork is in place just to
5 deter those that are most in need from getting
6 what they need. If we were really concerned, you
7 wouldn't make it that difficult. Has anybody done
8 studies as to how it can be trimmed down or
9 eliminated and still supposedly capture the
10 information that's needed?

11 AINE DUGGAN: I think even in the
12 current proposals in Congress there are a couple
13 of options, not the least of which is using
14 existing government data to identify who should be
15 eligible. So even using census data, you can
16 identify who is eligible and determine which
17 schools would be reimbursed at what rates. We
18 would fully support that as a pilot moving
19 forward.

20 In fact, using government data
21 should allow them to move beyond pilot and move to
22 full implementation within the first year. There
23 are other options on the table as well, of course.

24 JOEL BERG: Madame Chairwoman, just
25 because you're paranoid doesn't mean everyone is

2 not out to get you. There is no question that
3 research I've done about these programs that there
4 were very conservative people who had many
5 cultural biases who purposely set up the programs
6 to limit certain types of people they found
7 objectionable getting help from these programs.
8 Philadelphia has used a pilot authority to
9 dramatically reduce the paperwork the schools have
10 using census data.

11 Honestly, if census data is good
12 enough to determine who our United States Congress
13 people are, it should be good enough to determine
14 who gets school meals.

15 KRISTEN MANCINELLI: I would also
16 just add that the Medicaid pilot that's in the
17 Senate bill right now to allow direct
18 certification from the Medicaid program into
19 school meals only allows for the first year of the
20 pilot to have 2.5% of the eligible free and
21 reduced priced children in the country. New York
22 City has already more than that, almost 4% of
23 those kids. So we are not eligible to participate
24 in that pilot because it's not big enough. So we
25 would love to see that pilot expanded or even

2 going to full program.

3 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.

4 We've been joined by Council Member Recchia, chair
5 of the Finance Committee and Council Member
6 Crowley has a question.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Thank you,
8 Chair Foster. I really do agree with the idea of
9 having the school breakfast in the classroom. I
10 think as a parent who has two school age children,
11 all too often they're just getting to school right
12 when school starts. For those students that don't
13 have breakfast, this will make sure that they
14 actually have the time for breakfast.

15 My question is about the WIC
16 program as it relates to expectant mothers. Not
17 much discussion has gone on about that particular
18 program. I think it's a wonderful program. Are
19 there ways in this plan to expand on that to reach
20 more parents and infants?

21 KRISTEN MANCINELLI: We do have
22 Stacey Flanagan here from Public Health Solutions
23 which is the largest WIC agency. She will be
24 providing testimony and I think she can probably
25 answer more. I can say that I'm aware that the

2 certification period being extended from six
3 months to one year for children is a good change.
4 I don't know if anyone else has comments.

5 JOEL BERG: The only basic thing
6 I'd say is with the exception of commodities going
7 to food banks, it's the only major federal
8 nutrition assistance program that is not an
9 entitlement and is a discretionary program. That
10 means if 50 million people were eligible for it
11 and Congress only came up with 30 million people
12 worth of dollars, they're out as opposed to food
13 stamps, now the SNAP program, school meals which
14 rise when the need increases.

15 My organization actually hopes this
16 bill creates WIC as an entitlement program. I
17 think the political tea leaves are that's not
18 going to happen. That would cost a lot more
19 money. And there are serious problems with the
20 infrastructure to manage WIC and it has been less
21 responsive to the economic downturn than the SNAP
22 food stamps program has or school meals, and we
23 definitely think that's something that this bill
24 should address.

25 One good thing that happened in WIC

2 recently, for the first time in the history of the
3 program, you can now buy fresh produce as part of
4 the normal WIC package. So that is an
5 improvement. But they have not been able to
6 implement the full recommendations of the
7 Institute of Medicine simply, again, because there
8 is not enough money.

9 Now when we fight wars in
10 Afghanistan they ask the generals what they need
11 to finish the jobs. They don't say how much do we
12 have. Why do we do it in reverse when it comes to
13 feeding our kids?

14 AINE DUGGAN: I think the most
15 important thing I can say about WIC is to say that
16 the best resource on WIC is actually here in the
17 audience and that's Agnes Molnar, who is basically
18 the best resource in the entire state on WIC. I
19 do think that she should answer any and all
20 questions that you may have about the program.

21 JOEL BERG: Just one more thing,
22 the WIC program has saved 200,000 babies from
23 dying at birth, according to research the USDA did
24 that I updated. So I would challenge people of
25 all political spectrums, if you believe you're

2 pro-life you should support extra funding for a
3 program that keeps babies from dying at birth.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Thank you
5 very much. I just have one last question. What
6 can be done as lay people to educate each other
7 further or like in council offices? I have five
8 council meetings a month, so I've got a very
9 diverse range of constituents coming through that
10 we can educate them in terms of what they're
11 entitled to and also to be very vocal in getting
12 this message out.

13 KRISTEN MANCINELLI: I'll just
14 respond to that. As kind of the administrative
15 coordinator of the New York City Alliance for CNR,
16 this last year we have gotten so many more
17 individuals who are not professional advocates to
18 engage in this debate. So we took a group of
19 chefs and culinary professionals down to D.C. to
20 make lobby visits. Some people said that they had
21 never experienced anything like that. They didn't
22 know they could speak to their elected officials.
23 It was totally new to them.

24 So I would congratulate the folks
25 who have been participating in this alliance for

2 bringing up the Child Nutrition Reauthorization in
3 so many different forums to educate their peers
4 and others about this. They've done letter
5 writing at the Green Market. They've done letter
6 writing in schools. They've just talked about the
7 legislation, which is not something that often
8 happens for some obscure legislation that comes up
9 every five years that's a national debate.

10 Then for the Council, absolutely
11 the letters that are going around now that you've
12 already gotten 500 signatures. You had an action
13 page on the Council website last year on this,
14 which is phenomenal. The press conferences and
15 holding a hearing like this one is just a great
16 boost to the movement. I would say those are
17 great things.

18 AINE DUGGAN: The other thing I
19 would add in addition to all of the advocacy the
20 Council is doing around CNR which is magnificent,
21 I would say that the Council can play a real role
22 in terms of helping schools to adopt the in-
23 classroom breakfast and the grab and go. In fact,
24 at the Food Bank we've done some work with some
25 Council Members around the city so that they can

2 do outreach to the schools in their district and
3 encourage those schools to make sure that in-
4 classroom breakfast is in place because it isn't
5 in a lot of schools.

6 Quite frankly, a City Council
7 member calling up a school and encouraging a
8 school principal to take that program on is very
9 different from advocates doing the same job. So
10 we would hope that all Council Members would jump
11 onboard with that.

12 JOEL BERG: Amen to that. I just
13 also want to thank the Council for funding us and
14 the Food Bank and others here to do outreach work.
15 The Council has been very supportive and we
16 obviously hope the Council does so again in the
17 budget process. There are still hundreds of
18 millions of dollars in federal benefits that
19 people are not drawing down in the city.

20 While we've been very effective
21 getting the word out about SNAP and food stamps,
22 we should send the message out that child
23 nutrition programs even under the current law can
24 have much higher utilization rates.

25 I don't want to say it too loudly

2 so Lou Dobbs hears, but the truth is there are no
3 immigration requirements on WIC, on school
4 breakfast, on school lunch, on after school
5 snacks, on summer meals, so everyone you can help
6 us get the message out in multiple languages.
7 People should come and get it. Their tax dollars
8 have paid for it.

9 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Do you
10 actually have information that we can put in
11 Council offices that speak to this?

12 JOEL BERG: Yes. I believe I'm
13 meeting with your staff on Friday and we'll hand
14 deliver some.

15 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Great. Thank
16 you very much. Our next panel is Kathy Goldman
17 from Community Food Advocates, Mark Dunle, Janet
18 Poppendieck and Stacey Flanagan.

19 KATHY GOLDMAN: My name is Kathy
20 Goldman. I'm with Community Food Advocates.
21 Actually, my colleague Agnes Molnar is the person
22 that Aine Duggan referred to who is the world's
23 leading expert on WIC. So if you want some
24 information about that, she's right there.

25 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Are you signed

2 in to speak?

3 KATHY GOLDMAN: No. We figured
4 only one of us would do it.

5 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Why don't we
6 do this, if we can give her a paper to sign in
7 when you finish handing out paper so that way when
8 you need to jump in we'll know who you are and you
9 can answer Council Member Crowley's question even
10 though she had to run. All of you can jump in.
11 Thank you, we can start with you.

12 KATHY GOLDMAN: My name is Kathy
13 Goldman. Some of the questions you asked I
14 thought were really important because those of us
15 who do this work every day, some of it is pretty
16 technical and so forth and it's impossible to
17 expect every Council Member to get to know all of
18 this stuff. We are available to you at any time
19 of day and night and we'll be happy to go into it.

20 I also don't want to repeat what's
21 been said. We are part of the alliance and agree
22 with the points that were made. I would rather
23 focus at this point on a couple of points,
24 particularly about this issue of what we call
25 paperless universal school meals.

2 I just want to say why we're
3 interested in this. I mean it's very wonderful to
4 not have the city of New York spend somewhere
5 between \$25-\$40 million a year checking up on
6 whether this kid ate or that kid ate, but it's the
7 basis of the reimbursement. That's what those
8 forms are for. There are other ways of doing
9 this, as was mentioned before. That is what we
10 have to move to as quickly as possible.

11 The fact is we have had an
12 opportunity even in the last couple of years to do
13 this through a pilot operation. The city of New
14 York has not moved to do that and it would be
15 really important. But again, why is that? It's
16 because the stigma that was referred to before.

17 There are kids that will not eat
18 because they don't want anybody to think they're
19 poor, even if they are poor, and especially if
20 they are poor. But then nobody eats. We have
21 less than a third of the kids in high schools that
22 eat meals in school, which is insane.

23 It starts in junior high and in the
24 middle schools when they start worrying about what
25 their peers are going to think about them. That's

2 when it falls apart. In the elementary schools
3 you have a significant number of kids eating.

4 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Let me just
5 ask you a question as you testify. How does one
6 know that I'm the poor kid and need the free lunch
7 or free breakfast? Can you walk me through that
8 process?

9 KATHY GOLDMAN: The process varies
10 in different schools. In a lot of schools
11 somebody is paying. Therefore, if you're not
12 paying the assumption is that you are free.

13 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Like I'm going
14 through the line, this is my friend. He pays, I
15 don't pay?

16 KATHY GOLDMAN: It's not supposed
17 to be like that. There are theoretically a lot of
18 ways that it's supposed to be that you can't tell
19 the difference. But I will tell you, I've been
20 doing this for about 40 years, and the kids
21 outsmart everybody. I don't care what they figure
22 out, a little number that's different from
23 another. They will pick up the ticket and say see
24 that, that's the one. Right away, they all know.
25 And it changes.

2 So they all know about it and it
3 just keeps kids from eating. That is the main
4 point about this, especially honestly those kids
5 who need it the most. With a system where you use
6 census data or something of that nature to do this
7 instead of having people fill out forms.

8 Again, it was mentioned before, it
9 is the only time in public education that anybody
10 asks you about your income. So it just sets up a
11 whole routine. Aside from the fact that if you
12 even did it right, you'd have to have teachers
13 collecting money. You'd have to have schools
14 actually have Brinks trucks coming to pick up.
15 It's just nuts no matter which way you look at it.

16 Again, our concern, truthfully, is
17 that more kids eat and therefore that's the whole
18 point. In the testimony that we've provided to
19 you, it lists the accountability system of ten
20 different things that every school has to do,
21 aside from picking up the forms, every single day
22 they have to sit there and have somebody checking
23 off who exactly ate. The question is, if you can
24 do this by census data and figure out that school
25 x has 80% of the kids eligible for free meals and

2 10% for reduced price and 10% for paid that's the
3 basis of the reimbursement and all you have to do
4 is multiply it by the number of meals that are
5 served that day. So it changes the whole thing.

6 These are entitlement programs.
7 That is a big deal. In the high schools we have
8 less than 10% of the kids eating breakfast. This
9 is crazy. You asked if the money is there. The
10 money is there. Breakfast in particular is
11 heavily funded. There is no reason on earth not
12 to be feeding every single child.

13 I do want to say that the Council
14 is really doing something terrific in making its
15 positions known to the federal government because
16 that's where the game is right now. We hope that
17 the Mayor's Office will do the same thing so that
18 the points that we make here and many of our
19 advocates and so forth have made get made to the
20 people in Washington so that all of the other
21 points that have to be made so that this happens.

22 It doesn't happen all the time.
23 This is once every five years if we're lucky. So
24 we really need this to go through now and
25 especially this pilot program that we can start

2 immediately and not even wait for all the
3 machinations that they have to go through there.

4 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Great, thank
5 you.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: I'm
7 Council Member Recchia. I'm a close monitor of
8 this bill. This is a subject that's very dear to
9 my heart. In one of my middle schools in my
10 district what we started was parents could give
11 their credit card so there's no money collected.
12 They charge the credit card automatically and they
13 show a card. So everybody has a pass for the
14 lunches. You know what I mean?

15 So everybody gets the same. The
16 credit card gets charged for those parents. What
17 the school tells you is that you should really
18 give us a credit card because you never know when
19 your child is going to want more. That's for
20 those parents that have to pay. So everybody else
21 gets it for free. So that's one way to do it and
22 there are no children making fun. It's been very
23 successful.

24 The other issue when you talk about
25 breakfast, yes the money is there. Yes, children

2 want to eat breakfast. But the principals lock
3 them out. What I mean by that is that they will
4 not open up their doors until 8:00. They won't
5 let those kids in the school building until 8:00.
6 Parents have to get to work and from South
7 Brooklyn it takes them an hour or an hour and a
8 half.

9 So what needs to be done, and
10 nobody wants to listen to me, is that we should be
11 able to use part of that money to pay for a
12 teacher because you need a teacher in the
13 lunchroom. School aides and paraprofessionals
14 can't run a lunchroom. If we were to get that to
15 happen and if we would open up our school
16 buildings at 7:30 in the morning, I'm telling you
17 more children would eat breakfast and have a
18 better day. So I think that's another issue we
19 have to address and try to use these federal
20 monies for that. Have you heard that?

21 KATHY GOLDMAN: Yes, this has been
22 an issue. There are schools where the principal
23 will not open the door. For a variety of reasons,
24 there aren't guards there or whatever.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Right.

2 KATHY GOLDMAN: So that is
3 definitely some possibility. But the issue that
4 was raised before of eating in the classroom in a
5 way takes care of that. It also is a real
6 equalizer. It's not like somebody forces
7 everybody.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: But
9 there's a major problem with that and that is the
10 custodial staffing. That has been tried and it's
11 a problem with the custodians. That's what we
12 have found out. Listen, I've tried everything and
13 I've seen everything been tried. That is a
14 problem.

15 KATHY GOLDMAN: Well, I mean I have
16 a lot of comments about whether you should have
17 the custodians telling the school what they can do
18 and what they can't do.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: No, but
20 when you have certain contract details about what
21 teachers could clean, what they can't mop, what
22 they could sweep. God forbid they mop or sweep.
23 I've seen it all.

24 It's funny because I've studied
25 Japan and the way they run their schools. In

2 their schools, the community keeps the school
3 clean. After school, when the school closes, the
4 parents come and wash the floors and scrub the
5 buildings. What I'm saying here is that if you
6 want to do that then it has to become a team
7 effort between the custodians and the teachers.
8 Because there's a big problem with cleaning it up.
9 I've experienced it. I've seen it. I know it.

10 KATHY GOLDMAN: Council Member

11 Recchia, there are plenty of problems. But my
12 view of this stuff is that it can be solved. For
13 instance, Newark, I can't believe the kids are
14 neater in Newark than they are here. They manage
15 to do it. It's been done in many places,
16 including in New York City. It's being done. And
17 it's not a big deal.

18 What does happen is that it changes
19 the atmosphere in the classroom in the first
20 place. The kids are eating because they need it.
21 Second of all, they are eating with their peers,
22 which is a very nice experience. They clean up
23 together and they do the whole thing. It is an
24 excellent way to start the school day.

25 I think we can solve all of those

2 problems. We just need a couple of plastic bags
3 and a rag.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: I agree
5 with you.

6 MARK DUNLEA: Hi, my name is Mark
7 Dunlea and I'm executive director of the Hunger
8 Action Network of New York State. Compared to
9 Kathy and probably even to Jan, I'm a relative
10 newcomer. I've been working at this for 24 years
11 at the Hunger Action Network.

12 We do have an office in New York
13 City for about the last 18 or 19 years, but I
14 myself just recently moved to New York City.
15 We're part of the New York City Alliance for Child
16 Nutrition Reauthorization. We're also part of the
17 Northeast Regional Anti-Hunger Network which
18 represents the eight northeast states.

19 We support all the statements that
20 have been made previously and I won't bother to go
21 into detail to sort of repeat those points.
22 Unfortunately, the bottom line issue in this is
23 money. It was very good that the City Council was
24 willing earlier to come out in favor of the \$4
25 billion.

2 One of our concerns has been that
3 since the Senate Agriculture Committee has done
4 their markup of the bill and came in at only the
5 increase of \$450 million a year over the ten year
6 period, that a lot of groups more at the national
7 level fortunately than at the city level, have
8 retreated to the one billion dollar figure that
9 President Obama has put on the table.

10 That's not going to solve the
11 problem here. You can go through every policy
12 change that is needed and they all cost money.
13 Senator Gillibrand, very much to her credit, in
14 the Senate Agriculture Committee, did speak in
15 favor of the \$4 billion figure.

16 I think earlier speakers had
17 mentioned that she has proposed increasing the
18 reimbursement for the school lunch program by 70
19 cents per meal, a worthwhile goal. That alone
20 probably costs somewhere in the neighborhood of \$3
21 billion. You don't get to that when you get to
22 the billion dollars.

23 One of the problems with the
24 present \$450 million that's been proposed by the
25 Senate Ag Committee is that most of that money

2 goes into increasing reimbursement and not
3 increasing the number of hungry children being
4 fed. Our group, we represent the 3,000 or so food
5 pantries and soup kitchens in New York State. We
6 feed collectively about 3 million New Yorkers
7 annually. About a third of them are children.
8 Hunger among children is a very, very significant
9 problem in the United States.

10 That's not to say that we don't
11 need to also deal with the nutrition issue. I
12 remember back in '93 my organization was actively
13 involved when we got the state legislature to pass
14 the rule that required schools that were offering
15 the federal school lunch program to also offer the
16 school breakfast program.

17 At that point back in '93, some of
18 our board members, predominately the nurses and
19 nutritionists on our board were concerned about
20 supporting the school breakfast expansion because
21 they were concerned about what they thought was
22 sort of the weak nutritional quality of our school
23 meals.

24 The agreement we made back in '93
25 internally on the board was that we would support

2 the expansion of the school breakfast program at
3 that point but then we would work to improve the
4 nutritional quality of the program.

5 Unfortunately, that remains an unrealized goal 17
6 years later.

7 Three years ago, Governor Spitzer
8 put together a very good proposal called the
9 Healthy Schools Act. In fact, it was the one
10 thing that Governor Spitzer, Senator Bruno and
11 Assembly Speaker Silver agreed to, the first thing
12 they agreed to. Yet, somehow three years later
13 the bill remains further away than it was three
14 years ago. A big part of that was trying to
15 improve the nutritional quality of the meals being
16 served in the school lunch and the school
17 breakfast program. That's one of the things this
18 bill really needs to do.

19 A lot of times the biggest
20 opponents to our efforts to improve the
21 nutritional value of the school meals has been the
22 New York State School Board Association. Part of
23 that is a philosophical objection which I believe
24 over time they have begun to step away from. But
25 the biggest part is the funding issue.

2 Unfortunately, to provide better nutrition often
3 does require more money.

4 How do you fund the program? We
5 actually support the resolution by City
6 Councilwoman James. We believe it's time to start
7 taking money out of the military budget to begin
8 feeding our children. But right now the existing
9 rule is you have to take the money out of existing
10 parts of the federal agriculture funding.

11 Like a lot of the groups up here,
12 we do believe it's time to reform the farm bill.
13 One of the things that is quite shocking is that
14 if you look at the counties in America which have
15 the highest rate of subsidies under the commodity
16 programs, they're also the counties in America
17 with the highest rate of rural poverty.

18 So the fact that we're spending all
19 this money in the farm bill to subsidize
20 commodities is not actually helping people in
21 those communities where those prices are going.

22 We have a farm policy under the
23 farm bill which promotes cheap calories and we
24 would say obesity and other problems and expensive
25 nutrition. We need to change that.

2 I'll just conclude that we really
3 appreciate this resolution. But the bottom line
4 issue is to be willing to say at least \$4 billion
5 to try to help childhood hunger in America. Thank
6 you.

7 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.

8 JANET POPPENDIECK: I'm Janet
9 Poppendieck and I'm a professor of sociology at
10 Hunter College. I'm an active member of the
11 Brooklyn Food Coalition and through it of the
12 alliance. I'm also the chair of the board of
13 Community Food Advocates. I'm the author of this
14 book, "Free for All, Fixing School Food in
15 America".

16 What I want to talk about just for
17 a minute this morning is the way in which the meal
18 quality issue and the access issue are really one
19 in the same issue. I actually want to start in
20 the Gulf of Mexico with the oil spill, which may
21 seem very far from childhood nutrition but is on
22 the minds of many Americans, but in fact is
23 directly related to child nutrition.

24 That is because the reason we need
25 to drill and take those risks with our environment

2 and with our seafood supply for all of those of
3 you who may have been trying to eat healthier by
4 including more seafood in your diet. I think you
5 can be expecting to pay more for it in the near
6 future.

7 The reason we need to do this is
8 because of the way we farm and live
9 environmentally. Everybody knows about food miles
10 and our carbon footprint. But school food in the
11 United States is 7 billion meals a year. Now, if
12 we procured the food for those 7 billion meals a
13 year from sustainable raised and distributed
14 sources, we could reduce our dependence on
15 petroleum and our carbon miles.

16 I'm not going to go any further
17 into this but just to say that there is a
18 remarkable convergence happening. It's happening
19 here in New York. It's happening in Washington.
20 Between the anti-hunger agenda of making sure that
21 all our children have access to the healthy food
22 they need and the nutrition agenda around our
23 children's health and the issues of obesity and
24 the environmental agenda about the way in which we
25 produce and distribute food in the United States.

2 Sometimes among the advocates of
3 these components of this agenda, there's a
4 tension. Mark just referred to it. The kind of
5 tradeoff we sometimes perceive between access and
6 quality. But what I want to say is it's a
7 spurious tradeoff.

8 If we succeed in increasing the
9 access to school food, we reduce the unit cost of
10 producing a meal. The more kids that participate
11 and we see that in the figures here in New York,
12 the less money per child or per meal that goes
13 into the administration and management. The more
14 that's available for purchasing and preparing
15 food, so the better the quality of the meal that
16 we can produce.

17 So the access issues that are being
18 presented, the possibility of direct
19 certification, the pilots in paperless universal,
20 all of the issues that are being raised by
21 advocates in terms of making sure that our kids
22 get access to these meals is also the route to
23 offering higher quality meals. And obviously, the
24 reverse is true. The better the quality of the
25 meals, the more people will participate

2 voluntarily and the more the stigma will be
3 reduced.

4 So don't let any of us tell you
5 that these issues are opposed to each other. We
6 need that full funding. We need that full \$4
7 billion additional a year. It is additional
8 money.

9 I think it's important to make
10 clear that the money we're arguing over is new
11 money for the program because school food is an
12 entitlement. The money to pay for any meals we
13 serve that meet the reimbursement qualifications
14 is there in the congressional structure. But we
15 need the full funding in order to be able to both
16 increase the access and improve the quality.

17 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.

18 Are you ready to answer all of our WIC questions?

19 STACEY FLANAGAN: The ones I can't
20 answer, I know Agnes can. So good afternoon, my
21 name is Stacey Flanagan. I'm the director of
22 public health service programs at Public Health
23 Solutions.

24 We're pleased that the City Council
25 is hosting today's hearing because we believe that

2 the city can play a highly meaningful role in
3 overseeing the alignment of New York City
4 strategies for achieving the president's goal of
5 ending childhood hunger by support a strong child
6 nutrition bill.

7 As a large nonprofit in public
8 health agency we've been operating the largest WIC
9 program serving about 46,000 individuals annually
10 in New York State for about 35 years. Just for
11 statistical purposes, you may or may not already
12 know, that there are nearly 385,000 WIC
13 participants in New York City and about 60% of all
14 New Yorkers at this current time are born into a
15 WIC program. So 60% of all children at birth
16 currently are eligible for WIC.

17 We have a long-standing interest in
18 and concern for reducing hunger, promoting
19 improved nutrition, and fostering sustainable
20 agriculture. As part of the work that Public
21 Health Solutions does at many of its WIC centers
22 is we try to encourage discussion around school
23 food, eating locally, getting people enrolled in
24 food stamps and supporting people with health
25 insurance coverage. So a lot of these components

2 of automatic enrollment we see as something very
3 specific. If you are Medicaid eligible and you
4 have a Medicaid card, you don't have to go through
5 income screening for WIC. So there is a nexus
6 there that we know works. So it could work for
7 other programs.

8 Over the past two and a half years,
9 we have been operating assistance programs
10 particularly in a Spanish speaking community where
11 we do a lot of our work where we pre-screen and
12 assist households in SNAP benefits. In this
13 location alone, our staff has reported an
14 estimated 30% rise in requests for assistance over
15 the past two years and our WIC program is now
16 experiencing increased demand as well.

17 As Joel mentioned earlier, given
18 the fact that WIC is a benefit not an entitlement
19 program, there just isn't enough money to go
20 around in order to serve every single one of those
21 people that we intend to in the state. The state
22 of New York has a goal to actually serve at least
23 50% of all eligible. So right there we already
24 know that we cannot serve every person that's
25 eligible for WIC. We haven't seen lines and

2 haven't needed to put anybody on a waiting list
3 many years ago; we have great fear of that right
4 now.

5 Unfortunately, there appears to be
6 little reason to expect or anticipate any
7 significant improvement in these trends in the
8 near future, with recent reports of the
9 unemployment rate in New York City and other
10 issues around social dependence of these benefit
11 programs. So we're really concerned about issues
12 of recertification.

13 I'll talk to a little bit about
14 what we're talking about when we say moving this
15 recertification from a six month to an annual
16 certification. Every six months if you are
17 currently receiving WIC checks, some people call
18 them vouchers, you actually need to come into the
19 center with all of your children and prove again
20 that you have this great income need. We believe
21 that if families have just had a child or within
22 six months it's highly unlikely in this
23 environment to be breaking out of the cycle of
24 poverty to no longer need the WIC program.

25 Recertification comes not only with

2 a lot of paperwork but a lot of time to make sure
3 that we are registering each child and parent and
4 identifying each individual nutrition needs. So
5 this can take anywhere from a half an hour with
6 one person to two and a half hours. So this
7 occurs every six months.

8 We truly believe that we can serve
9 more people and that we can have a greater
10 continuity of service provided to our clientele
11 and actually get them involved and get them to
12 enjoy coming back to the WIC centers because in
13 our WIC centers we're trying to do more than just
14 give them checks for food.

15 A large part of what WIC does in
16 nutrition education. So that's something very
17 significant in what we see as important in the
18 future.

19 We believe this reauthorization of
20 the bill Congress and the president can jointly
21 decide how better to spend this money but we do
22 believe that reducing the certification will
23 support an alignment and streamlining of programs
24 and reduce the need for additional administrative
25 funding for WIC to then serve more clients to

2 actually enable us to serve more than 50% of the
3 eligible in this state.

4 We cannot overstate the importance
5 of these decisions. A strong child nutrition bill
6 at the federal level will allow New York City to
7 move closer to ending child hunger, prevent
8 obesity and considerably improve the nutritional
9 health of our children.

10 As Stephanie mentioned about the
11 preschool obesity crisis, the New York State WIC
12 program is the only WIC program in the country
13 that is proven to reduce risk of obesity in the
14 children in the program. They've been tracking
15 this for the last three years. Currently, Robert
16 Wood Johnson has been funding an extensive study
17 that will continue for the next three years
18 through Columbia University to continue to prove
19 how WIC works well.

20 So in order to help Congress
21 achieve these objectives, we have been working
22 with the New York City Alliance for Child
23 Nutrition Reauthorization over the past several
24 months to really push for a reauthorization act
25 that includes everything that we've mentioned thus

2 far.

3 We really hope that the city can be
4 effective advocates in making federal child
5 nutrition programs universal and more nutritious
6 while reducing their bureaucracy and giving
7 programs more resources and technical assistance
8 to serve all children.

9 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you. If
10 you can just switch seats quickly, Ms. Molnar, if
11 you could address some of the issues that Council
12 Member Crowley brought up with the WIC and
13 pregnant mothers and what we can do or what can be
14 done or what is being done? Just introduce
15 yourself for the record.

16 AGNES MOLNAR: Agnes Molnar,
17 Community Food Advocates. In terms of the WIC
18 program, let me just say that right now we have
19 money statewide to serve 575,000 people in New
20 York State. We are only serving 510,000, if that.
21 We are struggling to get more caseload which is
22 sort of an anomaly and we can't understand what's
23 going on. Because if this is only 50% of the
24 caseload, where are those people and why are we
25 not serving them?

2 The other thing about pregnant
3 women is that if we were serving everybody and a
4 pregnant woman came to WIC and we said sorry, we
5 have no money, that doesn't happen because
6 pregnant are our number one priority and the WIC
7 serves people based on their priority status. So
8 no pregnant woman has ever been turned away from
9 WIC regardless of what has been going on. They
10 will always be put on, as will infants who are at
11 risk. So those are our main priorities.

12 We think that what's happening now
13 is there are a lot of people who don't apply for
14 WIC who might be undocumented and terrified
15 because WIC does ask questions, but nothing about
16 residency or immigration status. As Joel
17 mentioned that one, like all the other child
18 nutrition programs, do not ask you how you're here
19 or anything about your status.

20 There are many lawyers who deal
21 with the immigrant population and who give them
22 the wrong information. They tell them not to
23 apply for WIC because it will affect their status
24 and that is absolutely not true. So we need to
25 get to those people. There's a big community out

2 there. We need to reach more immigrants with
3 information about WIC and why it's okay.

4 Then WIC, because it is basically a
5 nutrition program, it's geared to improve the
6 health of these babies and these moms to have
7 better birth outcomes. So it's very intense in a
8 way. So people may not like the idea that they
9 have to spend an hour or two hours being talked
10 to. But it's really crucial because they do into
11 their food history, what they need to do. The WIC
12 package is tailored to each individual's needs
13 nutritionally. So it's a much more intense
14 program than just getting a meal or getting a food
15 voucher.

16 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: From what
17 you're saying, it appears that the paperwork has a
18 specific outcome as opposed to busy work.

19 AGNES MOLNAR: Absolutely. In
20 fact, every provider, and Stacey certainly will
21 back me up on this, every provider does not act
22 like a social service agency. They really are
23 like a health care provider. They want to serve
24 that population. It's just an opposite from a
25 social service situation.

2 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.

3 This panel has been a wealth of information.
4 Thank you very much. Our next panel is Jennifer
5 Rothman and Carrie Laney, the Botanical Gardens;
6 Miguel Acevedo, Fulton Youth of the Future;
7 Kristen Schoonover, Wellness in the Schools; and
8 Adriana Velez, Brooklyn Food Coalition. We're
9 going to start with Ms. Velez and then any order
10 after that.

11 ADRIANA VELEZ: I appreciate it. I
12 have to pick up my son from school in a few
13 minutes. I'm with the Brooklyn Food Coalition.

14 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Say who you
15 are for the record please.

16 ADRIANA VELEZ: I'm sorry. I'm
17 Adriana Velez. I'm from the Brooklyn Food
18 Coalition. I'm the Communication Coordinator. We
19 were happy to partner with the New York City
20 Alliance for Child Nutrition.

21 We work to organize our members to
22 sign letters. So at every outreach opportunity we
23 could we asked people to sign letters to our
24 senators and to our representatives asking for the
25 platform. I think our biggest ask was the \$4

2 billion increase and also a swift passage of a
3 strong bill.

4 I have to say that as we ask people
5 why they are joining the Brooklyn Food Coalition,
6 school food is probably one of the most important
7 issues for people in Brooklyn who are concerned
8 about food issues, second only to access to
9 healthy nutritious foods in all neighborhoods. I
10 would say that they are so deeply intertwined it's
11 almost impossible to tear them apart.

12 We've been getting hundreds of
13 letter signed. There is a great momentum among
14 parents and other food advocates in Brooklyn to
15 make this bill a strong bill and well funded. I
16 think those of us who have been on the inside of a
17 school cafeteria in New York City know exactly
18 what this food looks like and why it's not serving
19 our children.

20 Those of us who are parents and
21 speaking myself as a parent, this issue takes me
22 to a completely irrational place. It's a very
23 emotional issue for me. Seeing how food affects
24 children, how it affects their cognitive
25 abilities, their emotional lives, it's so

2 important and we have absolutely no excuse not to
3 make this a priority. Thank you very much.

4 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.

5 KRISTEN SCHOONOVER: Hello
6 everyone, my name is Kristen Schoonover. I'm the
7 Brooklyn Program Manager for a nonprofit called
8 Wellness in the Schools.

9 We are a 501(c)3 organization that
10 works in New York City. We're in 13 different
11 schools and our mission is to improve the food and
12 fitness environment. Part of that is we put
13 culinary school graduates in the public school
14 kitchens to do cooking and training with the
15 existing staff.

16 Beyond that, I cook in the
17 kitchens, I teach in the classroom, mostly working
18 with elementary schools.

19 I just want to thank you Chairwoman
20 Foster and the rest of the Council Members for
21 having this hearing today. As we all know, this
22 is a vital opportunity to get additional funding
23 for child nutrition.

24 The reason I do the work that I do
25 is because the children in our public schools are

2 a captive audience and we have an obligation and a
3 unique opportunity to model the best possible
4 behaviors through serving balanced meals composed
5 of minimally processed foods. We currently have a
6 heat and serve culture in the school kitchens.
7 With additional funding we could serve more fresh
8 fruits and vegetables, which are proven to protect
9 health and prevent disease.

10 In the schools I work in, there has
11 been significant pushback from the School Food
12 Service Managers when we try to add Salad Bars for
13 children, or to prepare something simple like a
14 vegetarian chili or BBQ chicken recipe from
15 scratch. Right now we have volunteers preparing
16 the salad and volunteer parents serving it. The
17 comments I hear are that we don't have enough
18 staff to serve this food. We don't have enough
19 staff to prepare it. We can't afford it. Fresh
20 vegetables are simply too expensive.

21 Too expensive? Won't it cost us
22 more later when these children are developing
23 chronic diseases like obesity and diabetes? The
24 New York City DOE School Food Service is serving
25 860,000 children a day, many of whom rely on

2 school meals for their nutrition. Some of them
3 are eating three meals a day at school, and if
4 they weren't eating at school, they wouldn't be
5 eating at all. Many school children are already
6 food insecure, as we've heard this morning.

7 In my opinion, serving fresh food
8 in our public school will help all of our children
9 learn to eat healthily. With local sourcing
10 mandates that the New York City Alliance for CNR
11 has recommended, it will support New York State's
12 economy.

13 With additional staff in the
14 kitchen, we also have an opportunity for job
15 creation. With more fresh fruits and vegetables
16 and scratch cooked food on our menus, modeling
17 healthy behaviors for our children, we will have
18 less incidence of chronic diseases and lower
19 health care costs.

20 All of these elements are a win for
21 New York City. Public school children are
22 voiceless constituents, but be sure that this
23 issue is clearly actionable and it's something
24 that public school parents will respond to once
25 they're made aware of it.

2 I just urge the City Council to do
3 whatever it can to get this vote done in a timely
4 fashion in Washington. My understanding is that
5 if it's not voted on by July 1st that it may be
6 postponed as long as year. By that time, we won't
7 have any money to do anything.

8 Just as a parenthetical note, Chair
9 Foster, you asked about what resources you could
10 provide your constituents for organizing on a
11 local basis and there is something called a
12 partnership meeting. It's a management thing that
13 School Food does every month at every school. The
14 School Food Service managers are meant to meet
15 with a collection of children, the principal and
16 possibly parents to talk about what's on the menu,
17 what's being served and how they can improve that.

18 So that's something you can offer
19 to your constituents as a means for getting
20 involved and rallying around this issue. Thank
21 you very much for your time and attention.

22 JENNIFER ROTHMAN: Good afternoon,
23 I'm Jennifer Rothman. I'm the Associate Vice
24 President for Children's and Public Education at
25 the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx. I'd

2 like to thank Chairwoman Foster, Speaker Quinn and
3 your colleagues for giving me the opportunity to
4 speak today.

5 As we all know, the food system in
6 which we find ourselves today is doing tremendous
7 harm to our health and to the health of our
8 children. We've all heard the statistics that
9 have been spoken of today. What I want to talk
10 about is about the education that is required to
11 make change.

12 We know that the prevention and
13 management of obesity relies upon increased access
14 to quality food and also lifestyle changes such as
15 healthy eating and physical activity. These
16 lifestyle changes come through education.

17 Research shows that garden based
18 nutrition education has a significant impact on
19 the consumption of fruits and vegetables. And
20 that nutrition education alone is not as
21 effective.

22 Growing, harvesting and preparing
23 food leads to a sense of pride and ownership and
24 is shown to increase the quantity of fruits and
25 vegetables a student will consume.

2 I've been teaching for nearly 15
3 years and I've never seen that aha moment that
4 educators speak about so profound and immediate as
5 when a child harvests a head of broccoli. And the
6 same child who vowed to never eat broccoli just
7 moments before will taste and enjoy the broccoli
8 because they grew it themselves.

9 I also want to read a quick section
10 of a letter dating back nearly 100 years, written
11 to the president and founder of the New York
12 Botanical Garden. It reads: for some years I have
13 been conducting children's gardens in New York
14 City. I respectfully ask for your consideration
15 the proposition of establishing in the New York
16 Botanical Garden a training school for teachers of
17 children's gardens. The New York Botanical Garden
18 would seem to be the most desirable place because
19 of the scientific knowledge and sympathetic
20 educational environment.

21 Mr. Britton had the good sense to
22 oblige Mrs. Parsons who wrote that letter, again
23 nearly 100 years ago, with about an acre of land
24 to create a teaching garden as well as access to
25 classrooms and resources. And so began the

2 Botanical Gardens' long history of gardening
3 instruction. This is not a new idea but it's a
4 very good one.

5 The family garden where every day
6 children tend, maintain and harvest vegetables
7 continues to thrive and hosts thousands of
8 children each year. We are currently in year two
9 of a pilot program with C.S. 211 in the Bronx to
10 not just build a garden on the school grounds but
11 to provide the information and resources that the
12 teachers and administrators need to maintain the
13 garden and successfully integrate it into their
14 existing curriculum.

15 Just a few days ago I planted peas
16 with a kindergartner. I know that the connection
17 to the food he eats has drastically changed
18 because of that tiny pea. It is imperative that
19 we help children to understand how to make good
20 choices when it comes to their nutrition. And
21 even more so that we make these choices available
22 to them at their homes, in their neighborhoods and
23 most importantly in their schools.

24 Last year the Sanders Amendment
25 added authorization language to the Child

2 Nutrition Act to create a school garden pilot
3 program. And a very small \$1 million was added to
4 the FY10 Ag bill. USDA still needs to issue an
5 RFP for programs and we are advocating for the
6 program's implementation and expansion in the
7 Child Nutrition Reauthorization. Thank you so
8 much.

9 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Do you have
10 testimony or just are support? Okay. No
11 questions at the moment. I want to thank
12 everybody for testifying. I guess Miguel Acevedo
13 left? Okay. Thank you.

14 ADRIANA VELEZ: I'm sorry. I also
15 just wanted to mention that the Brooklyn Food
16 Coalition has on their website additional
17 resources for parents who want to participate in
18 the partnership meetings. Instructions on how to
19 get started, what you can ask for, and what kind
20 of changes you can make at your school.

21 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Very good.

22 CARRIE LANEY: I just wanted to
23 add.

24 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Say who you
25 are for the record please.

2 CARRIE LANEY: Carrie Laney from
3 the New York Botanical Garden. One of the reasons
4 why we wanted to testify today is to bring
5 awareness to those types of educational programs.
6 The last page of the Power Point, we have an
7 educational briefing on May 12th. So I'd like to
8 invite everybody who is interested in learning
9 more.

10 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Great. Thank
11 you very much. The next panel is Stefania
12 Patinella, Sarah Frank, Bryan Mullen, and Rev. Dr.
13 Ben Monroe. You may get started in any order.

14 SARAH FRANK: Good afternoon all.
15 My name is Sarah Frank. I'm a resident of West
16 Harlem and I work as a health educator and mentor
17 with HealthCorps, a non-profit organization
18 focused on fitness and nutrition education.

19 I work full time at Edward A.
20 Reynolds West Side High School in Manhattan. On
21 behalf of HealthCorps, my school community and my
22 students, I appreciate the opportunity to speak
23 today to the New York City Council State and
24 Federal Legislation Committee. Thank you all for
25 being here today to discuss the Child Nutrition

2 Act and support our children and community health.

3 HealthCorps works in 50 schools in
4 9 states on three main fronts: to educate the
5 student body; to connect and empower citizens and
6 organizations through community outreach; and to
7 advocate for policy shifts at the national, state,
8 and city levels to put health and physical
9 education back into the core curriculum of the
10 American education system and move the country
11 towards safer environments affecting health.

12 HealthCorps' impact and efficacy was confirmed in
13 a two-year study of our New York City schools
14 conducted through Affinity Health Plan.

15 My work as a HealthCorps
16 Coordinator involves education, community
17 organizing, and activism in a high school that
18 serves a mostly low-income population.

19 This past winter, staff from the
20 Food Bank for New York City, Global Kids and I
21 taught a class at West Side High School in which
22 students learned about the history of the Child
23 Nutrition Act and examined the role of school
24 meals in their own lives.

25 This class was created because we

2 all wanted to empower my students and inform them
3 about our political system. The class was
4 entitled, "Politics of Food." For six weeks,
5 every Tuesday and Thursday, for two hours,
6 students who are often disempowered in so many
7 ways got an opportunity to be a part of this
8 process.

9 My students were shocked to learn
10 that policymakers valued their opinions. They
11 were eager to share their sense of empowerment
12 with the other students in our school. My
13 students became advocates for the Child Nutrition
14 Act.

15 And one even traveled with me and
16 other community advocates to Washington, D.C. to
17 support Universal School Meals. In Washington,
18 D.C., we both presented to House and Senate
19 staffers about the importance of including
20 Universal School Meals in Child Nutrition
21 Reauthorization.

22 At West Side High School, we are in
23 year two of New York City's Universal School Meals
24 Program under Provision 2. I believe that our
25 Provision 2 status has led to an increase in the

2 number of students who eat school lunch and a
3 decrease in the stigma so often associated with
4 school food.

5 Provision 2 status means that our
6 students do not have to fill out the paperwork
7 we've been talking about required by other schools
8 to participate in school food. We have no money
9 exchanged at all for food in our school. And I'll
10 note, we have no competitive foods, which no one
11 has talked about yet, but there is no food sold in
12 competition with school lunch.

13 At West Side, we also have a closed
14 campus, which means that our students cannot leave
15 to buy lunch at the many stores and restaurants
16 nearby. School food is no longer the lunch for
17 poor students who can't afford to go out; it is
18 simply what's for lunch for everyone.

19 When our four years of Provision 2
20 status finish and we have to begin collecting
21 school food applications for reduced and free
22 lunch again, I worry that our participation rates
23 will decline. I know that this has been the case
24 for many other schools.

25 Many of my students rely on two

2 meals a day from school. Many have challenging
3 home lives, and for a variety of reasons cannot
4 count on a nutritious meal from home, even if
5 their family might not qualify for free or reduced
6 price lunch.

7 I started a grab and go breakfast
8 and lunch program in my school in which I give out
9 cold, brown-bag breakfasts and lunches on the
10 first floor of the school. Every day I have
11 students tell me how grateful they are to have
12 such easy access to food. Many students tell me
13 that without school food and without grab and go,
14 they would wait until school ended to eat their
15 first meal or they would cut class because they
16 were too hungry to stay in school.

17 We all know that feeding New York
18 City students breakfast and lunch is integral to
19 their success. Just as they have a right to
20 attend school, they have a right to good,
21 nutritious, high-quality food every day that
22 they're there. And as we would encourage our own
23 children to eat breakfast and finish their
24 vegetables, we must empower all New York City
25 students to do the same.

2 I believe that Universal School
3 Meals will be essential to ensuring that all
4 school children eat at least two nutritious meals
5 a day and will help reach President Obama's goal
6 to end Child Hunger by 2015. Without adequate
7 funding for the Child Nutrition Act, feeding all
8 of our school children will not be possible.

9 As a HealthCorps Coordinator, every
10 day I do my best to make sure that the young
11 people I work with eat breakfast and lunch, make
12 healthier choices, and advocate for their health
13 and well-being.

14 On behalf of HealthCorps and
15 students in the program, I ask you all today to
16 write to Congress and ask that they increase the
17 funding to Child Nutrition Reauthorization and
18 strengthen the Universal School Meals provision.
19 Thank you again.

20 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Jump in.

21 STEFANIA PATINELLA: Hi.

22 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Hi.

23 STEFANIA PATINELLA: I'm Stefania
24 Patinella. I'm director of food and nutrition
25 programs at the Children's Aid Society.

2 I want to sort of echo what many of
3 my colleagues have said and just say that I
4 support many of the comments that have been said
5 today, including things along the lines that
6 access and nutritious high quality foods don't
7 have to be things that we separate and work
8 towards separately. We should work towards them
9 together.

10 I'm submitting written testimony.
11 I want to just jump to talking about CACFP a
12 little bit. CACFP is the Child and Adult Care
13 Food Program. We've talked a lot about school
14 food today which I think is super important. I'm
15 focusing on CACFP because we run a lot of early
16 childhood programs and after school programs. So
17 we have a chance to feed children in those
18 contexts.

19 In the daycare programs and Head
20 Start, CACFP basically will give kids two full
21 meals plus a snack and sometimes even an extended
22 day snack. So it could add to sort of almost
23 three meals a day. That represents about 80% of
24 the calories that those kids are eating every day
25 from Monday through Friday. So that's an

2 extremely important amount of food that we're
3 providing them. It's a huge responsibility.

4 There has been reference a couple
5 of times to sort of the heat and serve model that
6 we have in school food and in other children's
7 food service programs. That's largely true across
8 the country. It's unfortunate because it doesn't
9 have to be that way.

10 I want to talk to you a little bit
11 about a program that we've been doing at
12 Children's Aid Society for about three years where
13 we looked closely at our food service program. I
14 want to talk about this because I kind of want to
15 present a vision of what the extra 70 cents per
16 meal will be able to get us. We've been able to
17 sort of invest about that much more money. I'll
18 talk about that a little bit more.

19 Basically the difference between
20 heat and serve and cooking from scratch sort of
21 hinges on a couple of things, money and also
22 training for cooks. We haven't invested in
23 training our food service staff because basically
24 their jobs have been to largely take things out of
25 packages and pop them in ovens.

2 So we have things like pizza and
3 chicken nuggets and tater tots and things like
4 that which present a picture of children's food
5 service or kid friendly foods that's extremely
6 limiting. If we don't put really delicious,
7 healthy and sort of well seasoned and cooked
8 vegetables in front of them then we're not only
9 missing an opportunity to feed them those foods so
10 the nutrition will actually be absorbed in their
11 body but to teach them that this is something fun
12 and interesting for life, so basically to teach
13 healthy habits.

14 Our program right now looks very
15 different from the heat and serve model. Three
16 years ago we decided to invest in bringing all of
17 our cooks together in one room and training them.
18 What's the training like? We basically talked to
19 them about nutrition; how to read labels, what it
20 means that something is cooked from scratch versus
21 something that's heated up.

22 Now what's the difference? So when
23 you read the label and you see the 30 ingredients
24 in there versus your homemade blueberry muffin
25 then you know the difference. There's that and

2 then there's just cooking. There's getting into a
3 room and cooking with the cooks. We have been
4 able to decrease the amount of processed foods by
5 a lot. I would say almost eliminate them. We
6 have increased by a lot the amount of fresh fruits
7 and vegetables that we serve and how we serve
8 them. We've made meals more interesting.

9 To give you some examples of sort
10 of the things we deal with in trainings is how to
11 roast vegetables so that it will bring out their
12 natural sweetness or to blanch broccoli to keep it
13 green and things like that.

14 We went into this project a little
15 bit tentatively for a lot of reasons and the money
16 is not the least of it. But we have seen that
17 we've had such success with the program that we
18 really started to talk about it more and realize
19 that this training is something that we can teach
20 other people as well to do.

21 I know we're certainly not the only
22 ones who are doing things like this. There's kind
23 of a bubbling of this kind of thing going on.

24 What we've found is that in some
25 ways we find some cost savings. If we reduce the

2 amount of meat that we serve children and increase
3 the amount of beans, that automatically offsets a
4 little bit. But overall, by far they're more
5 expensive. So we find that they're about 25 cents
6 per meal per kid more expensive. That 25 cents is
7 on the baseline of what we were spending already
8 which was already higher than the \$2.68 per meal.

9 So that's sort of a little picture
10 of what we've been doing and what we'd like to see
11 everywhere for every kid. Again, not excluding at
12 all that this is also an issue of access and that
13 we have to think about the two things together,
14 and this includes breakfast and lunch. It
15 includes school food, it includes CACFP, summer
16 food and all of the things that we're talking
17 about.

18 I gave you a couple of letters that
19 we collected from some kids. We too have been
20 doing some of this advocacy. Education programs
21 are a big part of our program. We've gotten kids
22 together to talk about what this means to them,
23 what this obscure piece of legislation could
24 possibly mean. So they wrote some really great
25 letters. So I included them.

2 A couple of the excerpts, I'll just
3 close out with them. Luz, she's 11, said I would
4 like school lunch to have fruit, salads, fruits
5 with salads and cheese sticks. So she really
6 likes fruits and salads.

7 Another says, I would like more
8 money Mr. Senator and Ms. Senator because we need
9 healthier food and more good, delicious food.

10 This is a particularly civic minded
11 kid, Nanjelyn, she's 11. She said I really think
12 the lunch ladies should get more money than they
13 get because they work really hard and some lunch
14 ladies need more money to pay for rent, for food,
15 for water and taxes.

16 A couple of the younger kids just
17 drew pictures like this.

18 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: We have it.
19 Thank you. That's great.

20 STEFANIA PATINELLA: So thank you
21 so much. You're leadership on this has been
22 really phenomenal. It's wonderful to advocate
23 alongside everybody in New York City on the
24 alliance and with the Council on this really
25 important issue.

2 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.

3 BRYAN MULLEN: Hi, my name is Bryan
4 Mullen. It's great to be here. It's my first
5 time in City Hall. I represent ES Foods. I
6 represent private industry which I think I'm
7 probably in the minority here, which is a first
8 for me.

9 We produce and distribute foods
10 primarily for schools nationally. So the last six
11 or eight weeks or so I've been across the country
12 in Milwaukee, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Florida,
13 Massachusetts. I'm here to tell you that the
14 things that are being discussed here today are
15 happening all over the country. The difference is
16 that New York City is just so much bigger than
17 everyone else. So in Milwaukee they have less
18 than 100,000 kids. You have a million plus.

19 ES Foods has been around for 12
20 years. Primarily we're focusing on programs with
21 low participation or low access, breakfast, after
22 school and summer. Everything is relative. When
23 I hear people talk about school lunch, I know the
24 goal with school is to increase the nutritional.
25 School participation in lunch is actually pretty

2 good. Everything is relative.

3 If you look at breakfast, it's
4 tiny. There has been some back and forth, some
5 conversations about why it's low. I think the
6 bottom line in studying it for us has been that
7 breakfast in the cafeteria doesn't work. So
8 you've had universal breakfast since around 2003
9 or 2004 and yet participation levels are still
10 hovering in the 20% range.

11 When you bring it into the
12 classroom, participation levels can get to 80% and
13 90%. To date there have been pilots done and
14 there has been testimony from people who have been
15 part of those pilots and how successful they are.
16 It really works.

17 Janet mentioned this earlier. It's
18 terrible to talk about the financials because it's
19 about feeding kids. But the financials actually
20 work. So if you increase participation your costs
21 go down. So it's kind of a no-brainer. You
22 stretch your labor costs, you feed more kids, and
23 you increase your reimbursements.

24 I'm not here with rose-colored
25 glasses. It works. Participation goes up, kids

2 eat, and they learn better, I mean this is
3 preaching to the choir. Everybody believes in
4 feeding kids breakfast and lunch. We don't have
5 to debate that issue which is a wonderful thing.
6 In some places you actually have to get at that
7 debate.

8 I'm here to tell you that whether
9 it's the custodians or the principals or the
10 teachers, there is information, there is testimony
11 available from people who do breakfast in the
12 classroom, alternate site, it works. You have
13 teachers saying I didn't believe in it before and
14 I was wrong. I believe in it now. You have
15 custodians saying it's not a problem.

16 In San Diego they have breakfast
17 sheriffs. They have kids actually set the meals
18 down and then clean up. In Baltimore they have
19 older kids who do it and get community service.
20 It's really not hard and it really works.

21 So I applaud you guys for your
22 efforts with CNR in terms of the funding. If you
23 can get the funding back to the 100% level that
24 would be great and to improve nutrition for lunch,
25 et cetera. But I'm here to tell you that there

2 are some simple things that could be done aside
3 from this, that could be done tomorrow which would
4 feed over a half a million additional kids in New
5 York City. I hope you can do that. Thank you
6 very much.

7 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.

8 REV. DR. BEN MONROE: Good
9 afternoon New York City Councilpersons. My name
10 is Rev. Dr. Ben Monroe. I represent Cold or Hot
11 Food and Music Ministry which is called COHFAMM.

12 Thank you for taking the time to
13 hear what people like me have to say about CNR
14 that is before Congress to act upon. I don't
15 claim to know all the particulars that are needed
16 to move this effort forward. Actually I'm a
17 student in this process or work in progress.
18 Therefore, I will share with you what I do think
19 within and about our hungry communities.

20 I would like to begin my
21 perspective on this matter before us with Council
22 Member Robert Jackson's statement: "It is
23 essential that we eliminate hunger and nutritional
24 deficiencies in this country, one of the world's
25 most advanced and wealthiest nations." With this

2 in mind, my passion for hungry people revolves
3 around hungry families, which includes children.
4 That is why, to receive my doctorate degree, I
5 developed a model at New York Theological Seminary
6 called Cold or Hot Food and Music Ministry.

7 This model introduces an expansion
8 of the food pantry ministry to include referrals
9 to community services, nutrition education, food
10 choice selection and enhanced hospitality. This
11 model has increased vital social and spiritual
12 services to empower and transform the lives of
13 people.

14 Presently, COHFAMM provides free
15 meals, independently, to seniors at USA Diner in
16 Rosedale, Queens, New York, and at the same time,
17 offers scholarships to young people ages 18 to 24
18 to help position them to be present and future
19 volunteer advocators against hunger.

20 While children's hunger is our main
21 concern here today, and we want every pertinent
22 agency to hear and act upon our concerns about CNA
23 or CNR, I feel that in order to move this issue
24 about children's hunger forward, while we are
25 waiting for the government to act, and further on,

2 we can address innovative ideas such as appealing
3 to existing supermarkets, restaurants and diners
4 to give free food to women, infants, children and
5 seniors one time, or more, per month.

6 The supermarkets could allow
7 shopping for needed food without charge. The
8 restaurants and diners could serve them food with
9 dignity free of charge. This would include the
10 whole family, which is not always a nuclear
11 family.

12 In such a ministry, food becomes
13 not only the means for physical and social
14 survival, but also the basis of dignity in food
15 choices, and a spiritually enhanced hospitality
16 that is meant to comfort people where they need
17 comforting.

18 Again, I thank the Council for
19 allowing me to speak at this hearing and hope that
20 my suggestions have been helpful and they can be
21 acted upon. Thank you very much.

22 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you very
23 much. I encourage all of you on the panel, as
24 well as those that are left to please be in
25 contact with my office with any additional

2 suggestions and testimony so that we can start
3 implementing some of these suggestions to the best
4 of our ability in terms of the Council.

5 STEFANIA PATINELLA: I'll say that
6 CACFP, basically all teenagers in CACFP, this is
7 unlike the elementary or daycare, they're
8 automatically enrolled in CACFP if they come from
9 certain neighborhoods, based on the demographics.
10 It's basically based on census data.

11 So if CACFP can do that, I don't
12 see why school food can't do that. That's an
13 interesting sort of point to note because the
14 mechanism is already there to some degree.

15 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.
16 Our final panel is Nancy Romer, Gregory Brender,
17 Claudia Coger, Frances Chapman and Fern Gale
18 Estro. Please come have a seat. You can get
19 started. Just say your name for the record.

20 NANCY ROMER: Hi, I'm Nancy Romer
21 and I'm from the Brooklyn Food Coalition. We are
22 proud members of the New York City Alliance for
23 Child Nutrition Reauthorization.

24 You've heard about the Brooklyn
25 Food Coalition before. I'll just say that the

2 interest in food has just been amazing over the
3 last several years. It's probably one of the
4 easiest and most vibrant ways of organizing
5 people. People are very serious about the health,
6 the environmental and the social justice issues
7 related to food.

8 I think it's really great that the
9 New York City Council is taking a stand on this.
10 I hope that once the Child Nutrition bill is
11 passed that you'll continue to act on this because
12 it's really important that it doesn't end with the
13 federal government.

14 The federal government needs to put
15 in the \$4 billion a year extra. Anything less is
16 going to be I think a travesty. We're not going
17 to touch hunger. We're not going to significantly
18 challenge childhood obesity without the \$4
19 billion.

20 But also, the City Council can
21 continue to play a role and that's what that
22 little purple thing is about. There are a lot of
23 different ways that we can all have an effect on
24 school food and on child nutrition.

25 I was fortunate to go to the White

2 House Advisory Committee for the Task Force on
3 Childhood Obesity, the Let's Move Initiative that
4 Michelle Obama is initiating. It was really a
5 very exciting and informative experience.

6 And also, to hear the extent and
7 the cost of obesity; we know the cost of obesity
8 in people's lives in how they feel about
9 themselves. My day job is psychology professor at
10 Brooklyn College. I can't help it. So of course
11 it's how we feel about ourselves and how people
12 feel about us and what we think our life chances
13 are and in terms of health, of course, the huge
14 consequences.

15 But in terms of cost for the entire
16 society, we're talking about \$1,500 a year more
17 per person who is obese in terms of health care
18 costs. We're talking about \$150 billion a year
19 more for obesity related illnesses in health care
20 costs.

21 So these are long terms costs that
22 the society carries and yet we're afraid to put in
23 the \$4 billion a year to prevent these illnesses
24 and these bad eating habits from starting. I
25 think that's incredibly unwise. I know that we

2 work on a quarterly report. But we need to be
3 thinking on a more long term basis. Those stats
4 come from Peter Orzag. He's the Director of the
5 Office of Management and Budget.

6 Everyone else has talked about the
7 importance of healthy food and I want to endorse
8 all of that but I don't want to repeat. So I want
9 to talk about two other very quick issues, local
10 sourcing and education.

11 First of all, New York City School
12 Food makes 860,000 meals a day. That's a lot of
13 meals a day. New York City makes a million meals
14 a day. That's including the 860,000. If we were
15 able to preference local sourcing and this is
16 something we can do on a citywide level but also
17 that the new CNR, if they include what we're
18 asking for, will allow us to preference local
19 sourcing.

20 Obviously we're not going to grow
21 bananas in New York State and we're not going to
22 have pineapples in New York State but we can begin
23 to shift the agriculture and the food processing
24 economy in New York State and that's something New
25 York City really, really needs. We need to have

2 the budget. We need to have the economy
3 development and we need the jobs.

4 If we were able to make that shift,
5 and it wouldn't happen instantly, but it would
6 happen over hopefully a short period of time, we
7 would dramatically expand the local economy and
8 jobs. We'd improve the health of our kids because
9 we'd have fresher food and more fruits and
10 vegetables.

11 We'd also have a big environmental
12 impact. Jan Poppendieck mentioned early on, and
13 I'm going to plug her book again because if you
14 haven't read it, read it. This has got it all.
15 It's a fabulous book. It's a great read. It's a
16 really wonderful book on school food, "Free for
17 All, Fixing School Food in America".

18 But the thing about the environment
19 is that over time with that spill in the gulf,
20 we're going to see more of that. We're going to
21 see more and more environmental disasters
22 occurring. We're going to see more climate
23 disasters occurring. With that we're going to
24 have to be changing a lot of what we do. Clearly,
25 new safe and renewable energy sources but also

2 different ways of doing business, different ways
3 of living our daily lives. And also agriculture
4 is going to be a very major part of it.

5 Anna Lapp, who is one of our
6 Brooklyn Food Coalition activists and a local New
7 Yorker has another wonderful book called, "Diet
8 for a Hot Planet," and it shows the relationship
9 between agriculture as it's practiced today and
10 climate change.

11 Agriculture as practiced today
12 accounts for one-third of greenhouse gases. That
13 is dangerous stuff. That means it's emitting
14 carbon out there instead of sequestering or
15 holding on to carbon which is what more organic
16 practices, more traditional practices do. It's
17 sending carbon out and it's getting more and more
18 dangerous.

19 At a certain point, we're going to
20 have to make some changes. This is a good time to
21 start that change, to slowly turn around the food
22 economy in New York State so that it's ready for
23 those big shifts so that it can feed more people
24 in New York City, so it can provide the food that
25 we need for New York City school kids. So I think

1
2 it's a win/win/win on that.

3 And then the final thing I want to
4 be able to say is about keeping food studies in
5 the curriculum. A number of people have pointed
6 this out. When you study food as part of the
7 science and social studies and math curriculum,
8 when you garden and grow food, when you cook, when
9 you visit farms, you have a much deeper
10 understanding of the purpose of food. It's not
11 just to feel good in your mouth. I think it helps
12 kids to resist the messages from big food, from
13 McDonalds et al. It strengthens their own
14 understanding of themselves and their communities.

15 So I think these are all the kinds
16 of changes that we need to see that they're all in
17 the CNR. We really, really need the \$4 billion
18 increase. I hope that New York City Council will
19 be very serious about building the infrastructure
20 for a future that's going to include a lot of
21 changes. So thank you very much for the time. If
22 there are questions I would answer them, but I
23 need to scoot out for another meeting.

24 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.

25 NANCY ROMER: Thank you very much

2 for the opportunity.

3 GREGORY BRENDER: Hi, thanks for
4 the opportunity to testify. My name is Gregory
5 Brender. I'm here on behalf of United
6 Neighborhood Houses, New York City's federation of
7 settlement houses and community centers.

8 I work most closely with our early
9 childhood education providers which include both
10 center based child care programs such as Head
11 Start as well as family-based programs through
12 Family Childcare Networks.

13 We're a member of the Campaign for
14 Child Nutrition Reauthorization and we support all
15 the goals and support Resolution 79-A, so I won't
16 repeat what everyone has said before.

17 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.

18 GREGORY BRENDER: But I do want to
19 just talk about the specific proposals we have for
20 the CACFP program which funds most of the food
21 that's provided in early childhood education
22 programs. We hope to include a fourth meal in
23 full day childcare programs. These are for
24 programs going over eight hours a day.

25 We hope to have geographic

2 reimbursement rates both for neighborhoods that
3 are expensive where for example you don't have
4 access to things like low cost supermarkets but
5 also for cities like New York where food is
6 expensive.

7 We want to allow staff
8 participation in family style meals. This is
9 actually something that the federal Head Start
10 guidelines recommend. Allowing it would not cost
11 much and it would also I think be a savings in the
12 end because of the paperwork of needing to
13 basically document which food was eaten by
14 children and which was eaten by a staff member in
15 a family meal.

16 We hope for funding for children
17 with special dietary needs for medically based
18 allergies. We have a lot of children in our
19 childcare programs who have dairy allergies. We
20 also support the proposal that ACS put forward for
21 a pilot program for the promotion of wholesome and
22 quality foods.

23 Lastly, we hope to eliminate some
24 of the requirements that family childcare
25 providers keep records and after their submitted

2 both in their home and within their networks.
3 These are really difficult requirements for
4 providers who are home based, already working many
5 hours a day and usually the only person in the
6 business they run. So we hope to reduce some of
7 those paperwork requirements as well as allow
8 providers to just have the records onsite at their
9 network offices and not both at the network and at
10 their home. Thanks for the opportunity to
11 testify.

12 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.

13 CLAUDIA COGER: Good afternoon. My
14 name is Claudia Coger, and I am the Astoria Houses
15 Residents Association President. On behalf of the
16 Astoria Houses Residents Association and my
17 community, I appreciate the opportunity to present
18 testimony today to the New York City Council State
19 and Federal Legislation Committee regarding the
20 need for more funding for the Child Nutrition
21 Reauthorization. Thank you, for your attention to
22 this critical and timely issue.

23 I advocate on behalf of my
24 community. I am a parent, grandparent, great-
25 grandparent and a foster parent. I interact with

1
2 many families and agencies. I know from
3 experience that the process of filling out school
4 meal applications, for some families, can prohibit
5 a child from being the recipient of school meals.

6 As a foster parent, my experience
7 with one of my teenage sons was that he would not
8 participate because he felt that it segregated him
9 from his friends as being poor, so he would not
10 eat at school. That came from his own mouth. I
11 believe that if all children had Universal School
12 Meals, this would alleviate stigma.

13 The present system of proving your
14 income is an added burden to families that live
15 with a restricted budget. I personally have
16 experienced parents who have knocked on my door
17 requesting lunch money for their child. One of my
18 neighbors asked me for lunch money because she was
19 forced to choose between having carfare to go to
20 the clinic with one child or give the other lunch
21 money.

22 These should not be choices a
23 parent or a child should have to make in their
24 daily lives. Children should not worry about
25 where their meals should come from. With better

2 access to school meals, students will be able to
3 focus more. This will make not only our children
4 stronger, but it will also make our nation
5 stronger.

6 I understand that there is a
7 proposal from the U.S. Senate Agriculture
8 Committee, which has some form of Universal School
9 Meals in it, however, this current provision will
10 allow only a few New York City Schools to
11 participate in that program.

12 I worked with Food Bank for New
13 York City, and other community advocates to get
14 signatures in support of Universal School Meals.
15 We went door to door talking about the importance
16 of Universal School Meals. Hundreds of Astoria
17 Houses residents signed letters in support of
18 Universal School Meals.

19 I have advocated not only in my
20 community, but have traveled to Washington, DC to
21 speak to staffers of representatives in Congress,
22 because I believe that Universal School Meals
23 would play an important role of reaching President
24 Obama's goal to end child hunger by 2015.

25 I, as a community advocate have

2 done my part in advocating for our children, I
3 pass the baton to you and ask that you write to
4 Congress and ask that they increase the funding to
5 the Child Nutrition Reauthorization and that they
6 strengthen the Universal School Meals provision,
7 so that more New York City Public Schools will get
8 an opportunity to participate and more
9 importantly, more of our children will have better
10 access to school meals. Again, I thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.

12 FRANCES CHAPMAN: Hello, my name is
13 Frances Chapman. I'm an advocate of fresh,
14 healthy food for all my fellow New Yorkers,
15 particularly our children. I know and support the
16 work of many of the folks here and know many of
17 them. My own affiliation is only to my community
18 supported agriculture group. I speak here only as
19 an individual.

20 First I want to thank the elected
21 officials here for the opportunity to speak. This
22 cannot always be taken for granted in our city.
23 Yesterday, those of us who went to a rally in
24 Times Square and a march to the UN to call for the
25 abolition of nuclear weapons, which also pose a

2 threat to our children, were not treated as
3 respectfully as you have treated us citizens and
4 people giving testimony today.

5 Yesterday, a police officer told
6 citizens, many of them elderly, to "get back in
7 your pens" as if we were livestock in a factory
8 farm and instructed to walk blocks back to the end
9 of the march should they want leave their
10 confinement. Nuclear weapons and healthy food are
11 connected issues. Let me explain.

12 Recently, there has been concern
13 about expanded and improved school lunch program
14 without cutting other nutrition programs. The NYC
15 Alliance for CNR has asked for a \$4 billion
16 appropriation at the Federal level, while the
17 Administration has asked for \$1 billion.

18 I want to remind citizens and
19 officials here today that current building
20 projects at Los Alamos and Kansas City for nuclear
21 weapons research total \$6 billion. Why should
22 nutrition education programs be cut for funding?
23 If we as a nation can spend \$6 billion on
24 investment in weapons that we all certainly hope
25 will never be used, can we not invest in our

2 children, who are our future?

3 In the glass and steel skyscrapers
4 of our city, caterers routinely serve elegantly
5 garnished sandwiches and fresh vegetables at
6 business meetings for prospective clients and
7 customers. In this setting, access to food is
8 considered a cost of doing business. Are children
9 many of whom go home to an inadequate evening meal
10 less worthy of nourishment than dealmakers? They
11 are our city's future.

12 Members, I realize that you do not
13 control the federal budget, but you do represent
14 New York's citizens. Like the ordinary citizens
15 here in this room, and the professional advocates,
16 you can only call for sufficient funding for CNR.
17 Many of you represent constituencies who do not
18 eat catered lunches or work in fancy offices.
19 Join with us to speak up and advocate for healthy,
20 appetizing school lunches for all school children
21 without the bureaucratic and demeaning
22 certification process for health and life.

23 I respectfully submit that calling
24 for improved school lunches and appropriate
25 funding for CNR should be a no-brainer. Our

2 children deserve no less.

3 The advocacy evidenced here and
4 your support for CNR are only a small, symbolic
5 first step to righting the priorities of our city.
6 Many issues do fall within your jurisdiction. As
7 our representatives, you work in public space and
8 thank you again for opening it to ordinary
9 citizens. Every vote you cast should reflect a
10 judgment on whether it empowers citizens and
11 expands public, as distinguished from governmental
12 space.

13 I submit that over policing of
14 peaceful demonstrations be ended and the civil
15 liberty of assembly be restored. We must nourish
16 our children on the example of an active vocal
17 citizenry as well as on healthful food. Democracy
18 does not exist solely in legislative chambers like
19 this one, it also is in the streets, or should be.
20 Let us fix New York together. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.

22 FERN GALE ESTRO: I'm Fern Gale
23 Estro and I thank you both Councilwoman Foster as
24 well as the representatives. I'm afraid I've come
25 from meetings today with Gillibrand's office so

2 I'm kind of jumping around. I'm very grateful
3 that this hearing is taking place.

4 I've worked in child nutrition for
5 the past 15 years. I'm a registered dietician.
6 Predominately my work at this time is with Head
7 Start. I work with the communities of Corona and
8 Woodside, I work in the South Bronx, I've worked
9 in East Harlem, I work all over the city.

10 Child and Adult Care Food program
11 with the Children's Aid Society as well as United
12 Neighborhood Houses spoke to while I was here, I
13 think spoke well to some of our concerns around
14 the early childhood and after school issues.

15 The overall problem that we have
16 with a lack of funding that what's been proposed,
17 what the president has asked for and what we need
18 is just so real. We are dealing with an obesity
19 epidemic. It goes beyond obesity. We're dealing
20 with heart disease. We're dealing with a
21 generation that will die earlier than their
22 parents did.

23 We have to find a way of modeling
24 for them appropriate foods, healthy foods. We
25 have to provide those foods. Universal breakfast

2 and universal lunch are really important. We talk
3 the talk but we're not walking the walk.

4 Somewhere along the line we have to make the
5 commitment to our youth, to our future, to our
6 society and it just can't keep waiting until the
7 next reauthorization.

8 I have colleagues who have said
9 we've done very well, we got something in and
10 we're making movement. Yes, we are making some
11 movement. I'm very happy to see the support from
12 Michelle Obama. I'm very happy to see some of the
13 farm to school support we've had. I do support
14 local economy and purchasing from our New York
15 State and regional farmers. Because ultimately I
16 think the upstate/downstate relationship will be
17 enhanced by that and our overall economy.

18 I also know that children respond
19 better to food when it tastes good, but I think
20 all of us do. Food that comes more locally tends
21 to come from varieties of items that have more
22 flavor. An apple from Washington State is not
23 like having an apple from New York State. So
24 having children experience that is really
25 wonderful, and I do that actually as an

2 experiential sensory process as a nutrition
3 educator in my programs.

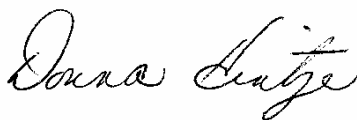
4 My experience covers also
5 agriculture and public health policy. So I truly
6 see where these two intertwine. I would like to
7 make myself more available. I do not have a
8 prepared statement for you. It's been a rather
9 busy time but I'm very grateful for these
10 hearings.

11 I encourage support of Gillibrand's
12 bill. I don't know that it's been mentioned
13 specifically. But it is Senate 2749 and House
14 4402. If I can be of any assistance to the
15 Council, I am working with various members, I
16 would be more than happy to do so.

17 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you very
18 much. I'd like to thank everyone that came out to
19 this hearing today. I think we have gotten some
20 important information that we can run with. Thank
21 you very much. There being no testimony, this
22 hearing is adjourned.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Donna Hintze certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.



Signature_____

Date May 18, 2010