

June 10, 2014

Dear Sen. Dick Durbin, Sen. Mark Kirk, and our respective U.S. representatives,

As religious leaders across Illinois, we answer the call to help our neighbors in need. Our faith communities are globally engaged, and we know U.S. policy plays a critical role in addressing human needs and fostering global development. Our faith compels us to support policy reforms to our nation's international food aid that would enable us to:

- feed *millions* more hungry people,
- deliver life-saving food more quickly,
- support vulnerable communities in becoming self-sufficient, and
- better utilize taxpayer dollars.

Reforming U.S. food aid is the right thing to do from both a moral and a fiscal standpoint. It is also in America's self-interest, as it would do more to foster peace, stability and goodwill toward our nation and would support the development of new trade partners and consumers for U.S. products.

As you debate legislation and cast votes in Congress, we ask you to keep poor and hungry people at the forefront of your heart and mind, and we ask you to support the following reforms to our international food aid:

1. Improve flexibility and efficiency, so we can more effectively respond to hunger.
2. Enhance nutritional quality, so vulnerable populations (such as very young children) receive what they need to thrive.
3. Protect food aid funding, so policy improvements lead to more lives saved.

**We specifically call on you to remove "Section 318" of H.R. 4005, the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2014**, which would increase shipping restrictions for U.S. food aid. This provision would make our food aid *less* efficient, increasing shipping costs by more than \$75 million per year. The additional cost would be taken directly out of our nation's food aid programs—literally out of the mouths of *2 million men, women and children*. Both U.S. taxpayers *and* hungry people would lose from this unjust provision, and it must be removed.

We look forward to staying in communication as you consider U.S. food aid, and we are praying for you as you make these and other critical decisions in the months ahead.

With hope,

*To add your signature, send your title, name, congregation and email address to [zschiidt@bread.org](mailto:zschiidt@bread.org).*

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