



October 22, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Speaker:

First 5 Alameda thanks you for your leadership in fighting for the needs of children and families throughout the pandemic. **First 5 Alameda urges you to continue support for the \$35B in child nutrition investments in school meals and Summer EBT that [are critical for California and our community](#).**

These are the only nutrition provisions in the Build Back Better Act and are vital to support children in our community who continue to face [unprecedented rates of hunger](#) and [our schools that are struggling to make ends meet](#).

Our mission at First 5 is to build a local responsive early childhood system in support of young children and their families and caregivers. Science tells us that deprivation in the early years has long-term consequences for each child and our society. There is and will remain a direct link between early childhood development, community and family conditions, and our county's stability and prosperity.

Please consider the needs of families with children in Alameda County, the seventh most populous county in the state, as you consider support of child nutrition:

- Alameda County is the **1st most racially disparate county in the state for food security**.¹
- In Alameda County, an estimated **9.9% of children live in a household that has experienced food insecurity** in the past year.²
- Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the **Alameda County Community Food Bank expects to provide 53 million pounds of food—a 64% increase**.³
- Children eligible for CalFresh are also eligible for Pandemic-EBT. The Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT) **benefit is \$5.86 per school day for each eligible child**.⁴

We remain grateful for all you have done to ensure the creation and expansion of the [Pandemic EBT that has brought billions of dollars in food benefits](#) to California, [particularly for Latinx, Asian-American, and other families excluded from other aid](#). Summer EBT is a long-held California priority, and the improvements in the Community Eligibility Provision will reinforce California's historic action to provide

¹ Advancement Project California. (2021). RACE COUNTS project. Retrieved from <https://www.racecounts.org/>

² ACPHD. Healthy Alameda County website. Child Food Insecurity Rate. (2019). Retrieved from Alameda County Community Food Bank. COVID-19 Response Update. (2020). Retrieved from <http://www.healthyalamedacounty.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=2108&localeId=238>

³ Alameda County Community Food Bank. COVID-19 Response Update. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.accfb.org/health-and-safety/#:::text=Our%20Response%20by%20the%20Numbers,3%20times%20pre%20pandemic%20levels.&text=We%20now%20provide%20food%20for,feed%2075%2C000%20people%20each%20day>.

⁴ California Department of Social Services. (October 2020). P-EBT Extension Frequently Asked Questions. Retrieved from <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/EBT/Pandemic/P-EBT%20Extension%20FAQ.Pdf>



healthy school meals for all, leading to millions of dollars in savings that we can invest back into healthy meals, a robust school nutrition workforce, and other opportunities to support a healthy, hunger-free future for our kids. We are particularly excited about the approach the proposal has taken to streamline, simplify, and align enrollment and eligibility for these crucial resources.

We again thank you, Speaker Pelosi, for your leadership in fighting hunger and centering the needs of children and their families. We ask for your continued support of the Child Nutrition provisions in the Build Back Better Act.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kristin Spanos".

Kristin Spanos
Chief Executive Officer
First 5 Alameda County