



The General

Assembly

STATE OF IOWA
Ninetieth General Assembly
STATEHOUSE
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

June 22, 2023

An Open Letter to Governor Reynolds: Act Now to Feed Iowa's Children This Summer.

Dear Governor Reynolds,

Last week, we visited the White House with a group of Iowans to speak with top administration officials about ongoing, bipartisan efforts to strengthen and invest in our state. We learned about the significant resources committed to fuel our economic recovery and improve the quality of life for Iowans no matter where they live. We also discovered an opportunity we don't want Iowa to miss.

While many children look forward to summer vacation, some in our communities dread the end of school because it also means the end of guaranteed school meals. Hunger is rising in our state, and Iowa's children are the most vulnerable. In response to this need, the USDA has a Pandemic EBT program to help those who qualify for free or reduced lunches have access to food over the summer. Even though this program was created during the pandemic, it is still available for Iowa children when school meals are not available.

However, we were concerned to learn that Iowa is one of 10 states that has not yet applied for this assistance. Time is running out and we must act soon. Iowa has until July 14th to submit a plan to the federal USDA and secure food assistance for our most vulnerable neighbors.

Our state government is responsible for promoting and protecting the health and well-being of our citizens, and our children in particular. Food is a basic need. If we want our children to grow up healthy, excel in their education, and be active in our community, they need to be fed. Practical, beneficial programs like Pandemic EBT are an important way to help Iowa kids.

Governor Reynolds, we call on you to prioritize the health and wellbeing of Iowa children and act today. Direct your Departments to submit a plan now for the summer USDA Pandemic EBT program for the sake of our Iowa kids. Please do not leave federal money on the table while so many Iowa children are at risk of going hungry.

Sincerely,



Senator Sarah Trone Garriott



Senator Izaah Knox



Representative Sean Bagniewski