



August 18, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to raising awareness about the millions of children around the world in need of permanent, safe, loving, and nurturing families and to eliminating the barriers that hinder these children from realizing their basic right to a family. CCAI is linked closely in partnership with the largest bipartisan, bicameral caucus in the U.S. Congress, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption ([CCA](#)). As an organization uniquely founded "by Congress, for Congress," CCAI has served as a trusted, principal source of the information, expertise, and resources needed to make informed policy decisions about domestic and international child welfare.

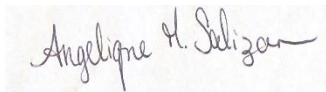
It is in this capacity that we are writing to thank you for your leadership in addressing hunger, nutrition, physical activity, and disease disparities in the United States, specifically the disproportionate impact such disparities have on Black, Hispanic, and Native Americans, low-income families, and rural Americans. Unfortunately, as you well know, this same disproportionality exists in the child welfare system. As you plan for the upcoming White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health, we urge you to not forget the ways in which the children, families, and youth associated with the child welfare system suffer from food insecurity and are at risk of disproportionate health outcomes. Addressing food insecurity will not only help to address nutrition-related health conditions of low-income families, but also reduce the need for removal of children due to neglect. A recent quantitative policy analysis on state Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits concluded that states with generous SNAP benefits experienced decreased reports of child maltreatment and neglect, substantiated cases of child maltreatment and neglect, and intake into the foster care system.

Additionally, policies and programs must address the very specific needs of foster youth transitioning into adulthood. According to the nonprofit National Foster Youth Institute (NFYI), 33 percent of surveyed former foster youth in California said they experienced food insecurity when they left the system. A report from the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) estimates that this number is potentially much higher nationwide; finding that while 30 percent of former foster youth receive SNAP and other food assistance it's likely that as many as 71 percent might actually need it, based on Medicaid-funded program enrollment.

Youth aging out of the foster care system are particularly vulnerable because many federally funded supports for youth end at age 18 and federal nutrition services and benefits, designed for older individuals or parents, have strict time limits. For instance, under Able Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) former foster youth are not eligible to receive benefits for more than three (3) months in three (3) years. Despite state-level opportunities for former foster youth to be exempt from this requirement, food insecurity within this population continues.

As planning for this fall's event continues, we hope that you will provide opportunities for children, families, and youth with learned experience with food insecurity and the child welfare system to be a part of the conversation. If we can assist you in any way, either in identifying potential participants or otherwise advancing these important conversations, we would be honored to do so.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angelique H. Salizan". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the typed name.

Angelique Salizan
Policy Director
Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute

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