

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 10, 2023

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write to you with continued concern regarding the mounting global food insecurity crisis and to urge you to include robust funding for emergency international food aid, particularly lifesaving Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) as part of any upcoming supplemental request to Congress.

According to the World Food Programme (WFP), the number of people facing acute food insecurity has increased from 135 million in 53 countries before the pandemic to 345 million in 79 countries in 2023. This alarming rise has been fueled by several factors including COVID-19, conflict, and climate shocks. However, Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 worsened an already dire situation by further driving up the costs of food, fuel and fertilizers, and pushing millions closer to starvation. With Russia announcing that it will not renew the Black Sea Grain Initiative, another significant shock to the global food system is expected in the coming weeks and months.

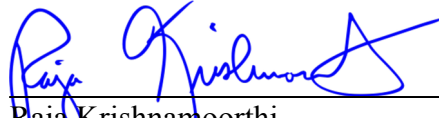
A recent report from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) showed that in 2022 food insecurity increased in Western Asia, the Caribbean, and throughout Africa, where one in five people were facing hunger. The report found that "approximately 29.6 percent of the global population, equivalent to 2.4 billion people, did not have constant access to food, as measured by the prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity." Nearly 150 million children – those most vulnerable to food insecurity – suffer from acute malnutrition, with an estimated 50 to 60 million "wasted" children that are on the verge of death and in dire need of immediate treatment.

Through the provision of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF), over 95 percent of wasted children can recover, yet only 25 percent of children have historically had access to this treatment. Thanks to leadership from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Congress last year, more than \$580 million were mobilized to provide a one-time increase for RUTF procurement, which has doubled the number of children treated. However, without sustained funding, RUTF treatment will return to previous levels of one in four children receiving the care they need.

The U.S. is already one of the world's largest and most efficient producers of RUTF and the agricultural inputs needed to produce it. U.S.-made RUTF is sourced from farmers across 27 states providing the core ingredients of peanuts, soy protein, dairy, vegetable oil and sugar. American farmers and RUTF manufacturers have the capacity to expand production to meet more of the emergency global need if additional emergency food aid resources are provided. Therefore, we strongly support the United States' continued, leading role in addressing global food insecurity and efforts to encourage other international donors to take similar actions to combat global hunger and malnutrition.

U.S. leadership and resources are critical to addressing these complex issues and we strongly urge you to include funding for emergency international food aid, including RUTF procurement, in any upcoming supplemental request to Congress.

Sincerely,




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Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



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Brian K. Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress




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Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



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James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress




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Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress




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Dina Titus  
Member of Congress




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Susan Wild  
Member of Congress



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Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress



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Chrissy Houlahan  
Member of Congress