



NEWS RELEASE

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Slow Food USA Pushes to Help Schools Serve Real Food

Time for Lunch Campaign Plans to Send Thousands of Letters to Congress Calling for Big Changes to the Upcoming Child Nutrition Act to End Child Obesity and Diabetes

BROOKLYN, New York – February 9, 2010 – Slow Food USA (www.slowfoodusa.org) today announced that its 90,000 members and advocates are rallying the public to tell Congress to get serious about ending child obesity when legislators begin updating the Child Nutrition Act. Last week, President Obama proposed adding \$1 billion per year to the bill, which the organization commends as “a good start.”

“President Obama’s proposal to add \$1 billion per year to the Child Nutrition Act is an important step forward,” stated Josh Viertel, president, Slow Food USA. “But, it’s not enough to give America’s kids a healthy future, especially when nearly one third of our children are overweight or obese and when Congress spends at least \$13 billion per year subsidizing the production of unhealthy processed foods. The public needs to speak up and tell Congress to make real improvements to school lunch.”

Right now, Congress gives schools \$2.68 for each lunch served, of which only about \$1 goes towards ingredients. President Obama has proposed adding \$1 billion per year to the Child Nutrition Act, but the money will need to be split up between many critical programs. At most, schools would receive an additional 20 cents per meal, which falls short of what they need to serve a healthful lunch with sufficient fruits, vegetables and whole grains. School nutrition directors and advocates agree that this would cost \$1 more per lunch. Hence Slow Food USA is asking Americans to tell their legislators to add *at least* \$1 billion to the Child Nutrition Act, and strengthen nutrition standards and help schools start farm-to-school programs.

“The math speaks for itself,” continued Viertel. “Obesity and diabetes costs our nation \$263 billion per year. And school lunch is so under-funded that most schools can only afford to serve

the cheap processed foods that fuel obesity and diabetes. Investing at least \$1 billion in child nutrition programs is the smart thing to do. Otherwise, we're continuing to put our kids, our economy, our health care system and our quality of life at risk."

The *Time for Lunch* campaign web site (www.slowfoodusa.org/timeforlunch) makes it quick and easy for anyone to send emails to their legislators. Slow Food USA has set a goal of sending 100,000 emails to Congress.

About Slow Food USA

Slow Food USA is a non-profit organization working to create a just and sustainable food system. Slow Food USA has 225 volunteer-led chapters across the country, representing more than 90,000 members and advocates. The organization creates youth programs to bring the values of eating local, sustainable and just food to schools and campuses; preserves and promotes vanishing foods and food traditions; and advocates for food and farming policy that is good for the public, good for farmers and workers, and good for the planet.

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