

November 2, 2017

The Honorable Robert P. Casey, Jr.
393 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Casey:

The undersigned organizations are writing to express our support for your legislation, the Nourishing our Golden Years Act.

As you know, the Farm Bill of 2014 provided for transition of the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) to an initiative focused solely on older adults. It is appropriate that the next Farm Bill update the program to ensure it is responsive to the needs of food insecure seniors, including facilitating their access to this important benefit.

The CSFP provides low-income adults age 60 and over with monthly boxes of shelf-stable, nutrient-rich USDA foods. In 2018, CSFP will serve nearly 700,000 seniors, delivering crucial nutrition to enable them to preserve or improve their health and independence.

Older adults who are eligible for the program are certified to receive CSFP for either six- or twelve-month periods, depending on the rules established by their state's administering agency. As you have learned from programs in your home state of Pennsylvania, the recertification process has been shown to pose a needless barrier to seniors continuing to receive this key benefit, given that their incomes rarely vary. Your legislation seeks to ease the administrative burden for those delivering CSFP and for the seniors who rely on the program by codifying a one-year minimum certification period and providing states with the flexibility to extend this time frame so long as the administering agency meets certain statutory requirements.

We appreciate your continued advocacy on behalf of our nation's older adults, and look forward to continuing to work with you throughout the Farm Bill debate to address the needs of seniors struggling with food insecurity and malnutrition.

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Alliance to End Hunger
Bread for the World
Defeat Malnutrition Today
Feeding America
Food Research & Action Center (FRAC)
Hunger Free America
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
Meals on Wheels America
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
National Council on Aging (NCOA)