March 2015

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow, USS

133 Hart Senate Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20510-2204

Dear Senator Stabenow,

As you know, this year Child Nutrition Programs are up for their five-year renewal. Robust Child Nutrition Programs are essential, because childhood is the most vulnerable stage of one’s life. Inadequate nutrition during childhood can cause permanent or long-term harm to a person’s health as well as his/her ability to do well in school and become a productive member of society.

The programs up for renewal include school lunch and breakfast, WIC, and others. A large number of students in area schools benefit from the school lunch and breakfast programs. In fact, despite the impression of many that Holland is a primarily middle class area, the local public schools have a significant number of students whose families struggle with food insecurity. Three local churches: Christ Memorial, Niekerk CRC, and Central Wesleyan provide food for these families to make sure children have something to eat during the weekends through Hand2Hand. In addition, the Kid’s Food Basket will be providing sack suppers Monday through Thursday to food insecure families in the two local schools with highest need after spring break. Without both the federal school lunch and breakfast programs and the community programs filling in the gaps, these children would suffer the costly effects of childhood hunger. WIC is also a lifeline to many area families with young children. These federal programs are critically needed! The need is too great for communities to address the problems alone.

As a Christian, I take very seriously Jesus’ words, “I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat” (Matthew 25:35). All members of our society have a responsibility to care for those who are hungry, especially the children.

So, I urge you to protect Child Nutrition Programs from cuts and harmful policy changes and to improve children’s access to these programs without cutting other safety-net programs. Also, thank you for your past leadership in the area of child nutrition.

Your constituent,

Name Address