Following Efforts by Duckworth, USDA Agrees to Fully Extend School Nutrition Program Through End of 2020-21 School Year

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) today released a statement following the U.S. Department of Agriculture's decision to fully extend school meal waivers through the end of the 2020-21 school year, giving schools the flexibility needed to serve students whether they are attending school in person or remotely:

"In the middle of a public health crisis, when so many Americans have lost their jobs and food insecurity has skyrocketed across the nation, the Trump Administration shouldn't be making it harder for schools to provide healthy meals to children and families who need them most," Duckworth said. "I'm pleased that USDA decided to

reverse this short-sighted action and give struggling schools and families the certainty they need after calls from myself, Senator Hassan and our Democratic colleagues."

When the Trump Administration announced its original plan to add significant burdens to student meal programs, Duckworth [harshly criticized](#) the USDA's decision and [wrote to USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue](#), urging him to reverse this decision. Duckworth also joined Senator Maggie Hassan and 27 of her Senate colleagues in writing to USDA to [demand school meal waivers are extended](#).

Duckworth has long advocated for hunger assistance, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and, in July, she [introduced](#) the *Expanding SNAP Options Act* that would address hunger needs during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond by requiring the USDA to expand online SNAP purchasing choices by enabling additional retailers to participate in the program. In the *HEROES Act*, she [successfully worked](#) to include provisions that would extend the Pandemic EBT program for families with children who would have otherwise received free or reduced price meals in school, through the summer and until schools reopen.