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President Obama's Budget Boosts Goals of Ending U.S. Child Hunger and Creating Food Jobs

President Obama proposed keeping the nation on track towards his goal of ending U.S. child hunger by 2015 by increasing funding for the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program and reiterating his support for an additional \$10 billion over the next decade for improvements in the Child Nutrition Reauthorization bill expected to pass Congress this year.

The budget highlighted the potential of food-related jobs to support economic growth and job creation in a similar proposal to one previously made by New York City Coalition Against Hunger Executive Director Joel Berg (<http://www.progressivefix.com/ppi-releases-policy-report-on-food-jobs-and-hunger>). The President's proposal calls for "nurturing local and regional food systems and expanding access to healthy foods for low-income Americans in rural and urban food deserts" (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2011/assets/agr.pdf>).

Said Berg, "The President is putting his money where his mouth is, backing up his plans to end child hunger and create food-related jobs with real money. Such funds are desperately needed to meet the immediate hunger crisis that is slamming so many Americans during this downturn, and also to create the long-term economic growth that will reduce hunger at its root cause, poverty."

President Obama's budget gives a total of \$8.1 billion in discretionary nutrition program supports, which equals a \$400 million *increase* from last year's funding. Along with strong support for the Child Nutrition Reauthorization, President Obama's budget included:

- \$7.6 billion for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- \$50 million for "Healthy Food Financing Initiative" focused on supermarket creation in underserved communities
- A proposal to continue nutritional support from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) that includes an additional \$20 average increase per month in food stamp/SNAP benefits, and a proposal to postpone time-limits in the food stamp/SNAP program for some working-age, low-income adults without dependents for another year

The complete President's FY2011 Budget can be found at:
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/Overview/>