

# Thanks/Explanation of Offering of Letters:

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Thank you to all who attended our in-person [Offering of Letters](#) this past Sunday urging our elected officials to end hunger through the Farm Bill!

The event was an absolute success, and your letters will soon be in the hands of Florida's decision makers. Bread for the World has found out that handwritten letters from constituents is one of the most powerful tools for activism. So, thank you to all of you who joined us and make your voices heard.

To those who were unable to join us, it's not too late to participate in this crucial cause! Using the template below, you can write your own powerful letters that will help continue this effort. If you feel so called, feel free to write multiple letters to your different leaders. Once you've written your letters, you can send them to St. Luke's at 4851 S. Apopka Vineland Rd, Orlando, FL 32819 to the attention of Mariam Mengistie or drop them off at our front desk so they can be delivered to our legislators in the coming weeks. If you're passionate to be involved in such activism, please reach out to Mariam Mengistie, Executive Director of Missions, at [mmengistie@st.lukes.org](mailto:mmengistie@st.lukes.org).

## Template:

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"Dear Senator/ Representative \_\_\_\_\_ ,

The farm bill is our nation's most important national food system legislation. It is critical to the work of ending hunger at home and abroad. Indeed, the farm bill impacts each one of us.

As Congress works to renew our food and farm programs through the farm bill, I urge you to support legislation that builds healthy, equitable, and sustainable food systems.

Specifically, I ask you to:

- Protect SNAP from further restrictions.
- Increase funding for fresh produce within SNAP benefits through the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP).
- Reduce food waste by cosponsoring the Food Date Labeling Act, H.R.3159/S.1484.
- Reauthorize the Food for Peace global nutrition program at no less than its current level of \$2.5 billion annually and allow additional flexibility to provide the most effective form of assistance in each local context.

[Add a sentence or two about why this is important to you. For example: As a member of St. Luke's, I am moved to help and advocate for people experiencing hunger and poverty – no matter where they live. This is why I urge you to support a farm bill that builds healthy, equitable, and sustainable food systems.]

Sincerely,  
[Your name] [Your address]"

## Farm Bill Basics:

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All of this effort revolves around the *Farm Bill*, a massive piece of bi-partisan legislation that is meant to tackle food insecurity in the United States and abroad. A new version of the Farm Bill is passed every four years, and each contains new efforts focusing on three main categories: Nutrition, Sustainability, and Equity. The farm bill affects every part of the food industry, from crop insurance meant to protect the farmers who cultivate food, to nutritional efforts that reward consumers and businesses that prioritize fruits and vegetables.

*Bread for the World* has specific legislative asks that we are advocating for in the newest Farm Bill, as seen in the template letter. By no means do you have to include all of the tasks in your letters, you are able to pick and choose what you want to include in your letter.

## Policy Basics:

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SNAP: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp Program) is the Nation's largest domestic food and nutrition assistance program for low-income Americans.

GusNIP: The Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program provides SNAP recipients with resources on top of their SNAP benefits to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers markets, farm stands, and grocery stores.

The Food Labeling Act: Is part of an ongoing effort to promote sustainability by eliminating food waste. The bill would create a federal standard for food date labels, creating a "BEST if Used By" label and a "USE BY" label. This will create labeling consistency across the country and reduce confusion in an effort to reduce food waste in the United States.

## Find Your Senators/ Representatives:

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<https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

<https://www.senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm>