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Member of Parliament for South Shields
House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

Vicky Ford MP
Minister for Children and Families
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

18 February 2021

Dear Minister

We are writing to ask you to scale up funding for school breakfasts to all disadvantaged schools in England and to provide this funding long term, in line with the proposal set out by the School Breakfast Bill.

School breakfasts tackle classroom hunger and improve children's energy, behaviour, and concentration, leading to improved academic attainment. An Education Endowment Foundation and Institute for Fiscal Studies evaluation of the Magic Breakfast model found that Key Stage 1 pupils in schools with a universal free school breakfast provision made an additional two months progress over the course of an academic year, compared to children in schools with no breakfast provision.

Improved attainment enables children to leave school ready to secure highly paid work, contributing to economic growth. New research published by Pro Bono Economics, in partnership with Magic Breakfast and Heinz finds that providing Year 2 pupils with just one year of free school breakfasts could generate more than £9,000 per child in long term benefits for the economy (£50 generated for every £1 spent). More than 40% of these benefits are estimated to go directly to the Government as a result of higher tax revenues and reduced public services costs.

We commend the impact achieved by the Government's National School Breakfast Programme, which has provided over 280,000 disadvantaged children with healthy breakfasts and improved educational outcomes. However, we are deeply concerned that this programme reaches just 7% of the schools meeting the government's own eligibility criteria and that funding will end altogether

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in July 2021, leaving thousands of children without access to the free school breakfast they have come to rely on. Many of us have schools in our constituencies which lost government support for school breakfast in December 2020 or are due to lose this support in July 2021.

The proposed School Breakfast Bill would address this issue. The Bill proposed scaling up school breakfast funding to all the 8,700 schools with high levels of disadvantage in England. The Bill also proposed making support to schools permanent at a cost of just over £300m annually. This could be funded by the Soft Drinks Industry Levy (SDIL) which continues to raise approximately £340m each year. In addition to this, research from Sustain has found more than £700m raised from the Levy since 2018 is unaccounted for. The unspent SDIL revenue can be allocated towards scaling up school breakfast provision.

As a result of the reduced parliamentary calendar during lockdown, this Bill has been indefinitely postponed. However, with child food insecurity rising and the educational attainment gap growing, there is now an urgency for this Bill.

We know you've been supportive of school breakfasts in the past and as we've outlined in this letter this Bill is affordable and will transform the lives of so many children. We would urge you to consider adopting the proposals included in the School Breakfast Bill so that every child at risk of hunger can have a free, nutritious school breakfast and be ready to start their day of learning.

Yours sincerely



Emma Lewell-Buck

Member of Parliament for South Shields



Robert Halfon

Member of Parliament for Harlow

Signed on behalf of:

Alex Cunningham MP

Andrew Gwynne MP

Apsana Begum MP

Barbara Keeley MP

Barry Gardiner MP

Barry Sheerman MP

Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP

Carol Monaghan MP

Caroline Lucas MP

Catherine McKinnell MP

Christian Wakeford MP

Christine Jardine MP

Claudia Webbe MP

Clive Lewis MP

Daisy Cooper MP

Dame Diana Johnson DBE MP

Dan Jarvis MP

David Amess MP

Dawn Butler MP

Derek Twigg MP

Edward Davey MP

Florence Eshalomi MP

George Howarth MP

Gordon Henderson MP

Grahame Morris MP

Harriet Harman MP

Helen Hayes MP

Hilary Benn MP

Ian Byrne MP

Ian Lavery MP

Jamie Stone MP
Janet Daby MP
Jim Shannon MP
Kate Osborne MP
Kim Johnson MP
Layla Moran MP
Lilian Greenwood MP
Lloyd Russell-Moyle MP
Meg Hillier MP
Mick Whitley MP
Mike Hill MP
Mohammad Yasin MP
Munira Wilson MP
Nadia Whittome MP
Olivia Blake MP
Paula Barker MP
Peter Aldous MP
Rachel Hopkins MP
Rebecca Long-Bailey MP
Richard Burgon MP
Rosie Cooper MP
Sarah Champion MP
Sarah Olney MP
Shaun Bailey MP
Simon Fell MP
Siobhain McDonagh MP
The Rt Hon. John Spellar MP
Tony Lloyd MP
Tracy Brabin MP
Virendra Sharma MP
Wera Hobhouse MP
Yvette Cooper MP
Yvonne Fovargue MP
Zarah Sultana MP
Baron Bach
Baron Hain
Baron Haskel
Baron Kinnock
Baron Knight of Weymouth
Baron Polak
Baron Soley
Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top
Baroness Benjamin
Baroness Dawn Primarolo
Baroness Drake
Baroness D'Souza
Baroness Goudie
Baroness Kidron
Baroness Lister of Burtersett
Baroness Massey of Darwen
Baroness Morgan of Huyton

Baroness Primarolo
Baroness Ramsay of Cartvale
Baroness Royall of Blaisdon
Baroness Tyler of Enfield
Baroness Walmsley
Baroness Warwick of Undercliffe
Baroness Watkins of Tavistock
Lord Russell of Liverpool
The Lord Bishop of Durham
The Lord Bishop of Gloucester
The Lord Triesman
The Rt Hon. Baroness Quin
The Rt Hon. Baroness Taylor of Bolton
The Rt Hon. the Lord Bradley