

1-20-1985

Children Hunger 2/13/1985 News Release Selct Committee on Hunger U.S. House of Representatives H2-507 School Lunch for Millions of Poor Children Threatened

The Mickey Leland Papers & Collection Addendum. (Texas Southern University, 2015)

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Recommended Citation

The Mickey Leland Papers & Collection Addendum. (Texas Southern University, 2015), "Children Hunger 2/13/1985 News Release Selct Committee on Hunger U.S. House of Representatives H2-507 School Lunch for Millions of Poor Children Threatened" (2015). The Mickey Leland Papers & Collection Addendum: Education, African Americans Repairs Education, African Amer. Racial Inequities (1985). *Series 11: Speeches, Articles, Trips and Meetings 1985 - 1989*. Series 11, Box 123, Folder 8809. Paper 20. http://digitalscholarship.tsu.edu/mla_satm_85/20

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U.S. House of Representatives
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news release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SCHOOL LUNCH FOR MILLIONS OF POOR CHILDREN THREATENED

Washington, D.C., February 4, 1985..."Millions of poor children will no longer get a free school lunch, if the President's budget is approved," Rep. Mickey Leland, D-TX, Chairman of the House Select Committee on Hunger predicted today.

"Providing an adequate diet for all Americans is an abandoned goal," Leland said, referring to the food and nutrition assistance portions of the President's budget.

The 1986 Federal budget proposal would end lunch subsidies of 12 cents in cash and 12 cents in commodities, a total of 24 cents, to children from families of four with incomes above \$19,000.

"26,000 schools, more than half of the schools in the National School Lunch Program, serve more than 60 percent of their meals to middle class students. Ending the subsidy to them destroys the financial structure of the program, which has served two generations of American children and has proven health benefits," Leland said.

"The 1981 budget cuts, of 11 cents per meal, resulted in 3000 schools leaving the National School Lunch Program. The proposed cuts could close lunchrooms in as many as 10,000 schools," Leland said.

"The rationale for ending commodity reimbursement is particularly difficult to understand in view of the nations's surplus and farm problems," Leland said.

"Limiting the the Women Infants and Children (WIC) Special Supplemental Feeding Program is another example of short-sighted, so-called savings," Leland said. "This program, which has proved savings in health care costs, serves only three million women, infants, and children, although 10.6 are eligible based on financial need."

"The President's budget assumes no increase in participation in the Food Stamp Program at a time when the number of Americans living in poverty is increasing at an alarming rate," Leland said.

"15% of the people in this country live in poverty and 10 million receive no government benefits. The President's proposed budget does nothing to alleviate these conditions and the related hunger and malnutrition that accompany them," Leland noted.

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