Dear Senator or Representative:

I am writing to you as a concerned constituent and advocate for the health and well-being of America’s children. I urge you to protect the mandatory funding for the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) in Section 21 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and reverse any proposed discretionary funding cuts to ICN.

**WHY ICN MATTERS?**

ICN partners with the USDA to translate policy into action by offering research-based education and training in all 50 states and the United States territories.  ICN provides school nutrition professionals with professional development opportunities and continuing education certificates that align with the USDA’s Professional Standards mandate.

By enhancing professional credibility and career growth, ICN strengthens child nutrition programs across the U.S. and builds a qualified workforce that makes American children healthy.

**Nearly half a million child nutrition professionals** have received training through ICN’s free online educational platform.

**WHAT’S AT RISK?**

**All Child Nutrition Professionals** could lose access to ICN’s FREE research-based resources, professional development opportunities, and technical support. **Almost half a million** registered users could lose access to their previously completed professional development training certificates.

**All Child Nutrition Professionals** could lose access to the **Culinary Institute of Child Nutrition (CICN)**, which provides operators with practical, skills-based training and innovative resources to prepare appealing, nutritious meals from scratch, reduce reliance on processed foods, and increase student satisfaction, food consumption, and program participation.

**Without ICN,** research that focuses on the Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of all School Nutrition Professionals and supports the USDA Professional Standards requirements could be lost. The research that ICN’s **Applied Research Division** produces is essential to providing the necessary foundation for hiring, training, and retaining qualified school nutrition professionals who help **Make America’s Children Healthy.**

**REQUEST**

**For over 35 years,** ICN has provided trusted tools, resources, and training that enhance program operations by equipping staff with the knowledge and skills to manage programs effectively. These efforts profoundly impact schools, communities, and the health of our nation’s children.

Eliminating discretionary funding for ICN would significantly reduce national access to ICN’s essential services and shift the burden to USDA and state agencies, which may not have the capacity or resources to replace them. ICN is not a duplicative effort but a critical partner in ensuring that child nutrition programs operate safely, efficiently, and with the highest quality standards.

**We need your voice to protect funding for the Institute of Child Nutrition, ensuring a skilled child nutrition workforce that is knowledgeable about providing healthy, safe, and appealing meals in schools and childcare programs and fostering the health and well-being of America’s children.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Full Name]
[Your Position Title and Organization]
[Your City, State]