



March 24, 2009

Honorable Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor, The City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

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RE: TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FEDERAL EXTENSION OF
FOOD STAMP BENEFITS FOR ABLE-BODIED
SINGLE ADULTS

Dear Mayor Bloomberg:

The Women's City Club of New York again urges you to reverse your decision regarding your refusal to take advantage of the Federal extension of food stamp benefits for able-bodied single adults. These funds come at no cost to the city and, if not used, will go unspent; if used by us, they could ensure that thousands of New Yorkers would not go hungry. As you know, the WCC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that advocates for public policies to improve the lives of New Yorkers and has been concerned with this issue for some time.

We understand your desire to encourage able-bodied adults to work. However, in these terrible economic times, many people have been laid off and cannot find work. It is unrealistic for government to assume that all able-bodied men and women who are unemployed, or who do not have a steady work history, will be able to find work in this job market.

The distribution of additional food stamps also will help food pantries that are overstretched by people desperately needing food. And finally, not only would the federally funded food stamps help feed a population in need, they would help spur the local economy since the food stamps would be spent in local bodegas and other neighborhood stores. This is an added advantage that cannot and should not be ignored.

We strongly believe that government at all levels has a responsibility to ensure that our citizens do not go hungry. The federal money involved is free to the city, and as you are preparing necessary cuts to the budget because of this financial crisis, it makes no sense to refuse the federal funds, or allow single people to go hungry. So please rethink your policy and take advantage of the federal extension of food stamps to able-bodied single adults.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely

Ruth E. Acker
President

Elizabeth Lubetkin Lipton
WCC Past President
Chair, Economic Security Task Force