



## Statement Regarding Congressional Hearing On Global Food Crisis

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The following is a statement from Ernie Shea, project coordinator for 25x'25, on today's hearing – held jointly by the Congressional Children's Caucus, the Congressional Global Health Caucus and the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health - on the rapidly increasing price of food in the developing world and its effect on children.

"The National 25x'25 Alliance shares the world's concern about the impact that rising food prices are having on efforts to combat world hunger and improve the health of children, particularly in developing countries. These challenges have acute consequences for millions of people across the globe, with children and the poor disproportionately affected. The 25x'25 Alliance is working to advance solutions that will improve the quality of life for all people through the development of resources that can provide clean renewable energy while continuing to produce ample, safe and affordable supplies of food, feed and fiber.

"Recent media coverage cites biofuel production as a primary cause of the increasing costs of food. However, a closer look at the facts behind this global calamity shows otherwise. While biofuel production has some impact on food prices, the primary reasons underlying the escalation in food prices are skyrocketing demand from a growing and increasingly prosperous middle class in countries like China and India; significant crop failures, including a shortfall of wheat from Australia; and most immediate, an explosion in energy costs driven largely by the price of oil.

"World hunger is a tragedy and solutions must be directed at its root causes. Blaming biofuels, while perhaps politically attractive, distracts from the focus needed to address these problems. We join others on the world stage that advocate an increase in investment in agriculture production in developing countries, such as the pledge made by African Union nations to increase their commitment from 4 percent of their GDP to 10 percent, adding \$5 billion to efforts to boost farm yields. Higher food grain prices, while challenging in the short run, provide a long-term solution for combating world hunger because they offer powerful incentives for farmers in developing nations to produce food domestically and reduce the need to import food.

"The world's children also deserve access to clean and affordable energy. Millions of children and women suffer from indoor air pollution caused by inefficient cook stoves and traditional biomass use. Modern bioenergy solutions can help alleviate these health threats while also addressing climate-change challenges exacerbated by greenhouse gas emissions from the burning of fossil fuels to meet transportation and basic energy needs. The world's poor, especially children, will be most vulnerable to climate change impacts. The developed world should direct aid to the immediate food crisis, but also commit to long-term solutions, which renewable forms of energy can provide."

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25x'25 is a diverse alliance of agricultural, forestry, environmental, conservation and other organizations and businesses that are working collaboratively to advance the goal of securing 25 percent of the nation's energy needs from renewable sources by the year 2025. 25x'25 is led by a national steering committee composed of volunteer leaders. The 25x'25 goal has been endorsed by nearly 700 partners, 29 Governors, 15 state legislatures and the U.S. Congress through HR6 which was signed into law by President Bush on December 19, 2007.

If you know longer wish to receive news releases from the National 25x'25 Renewable Energy Alliance, please notify us by e-mail at [info@25x'25.org](mailto:info@25x'25.org).