

# The Florida Partnership to End Childhood Hunger

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

**MEDIA RELEASE**

For March 26, 2008

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## Unused federal aid means MORE hungry children

TALLAHASSEE, FL -- Poorer families in Florida are missing out on more than \$1 billion in unclaimed benefits meant to provide nutritious meals for the state's hungry children.

That troubling assessment comes from a newly formed group of prominent individuals and charitable groups that is seeking to craft ways to provide healthy eating for many of Florida's neediest children.

**The group—led by Lt. Governor Jeff Kottkamp and Grace Nelson (wife of U.S. Senator Bill Nelson)—will formally release a Ten Point Plan for Ending Childhood Hunger in Florida at a news conference set for 11:30 a.m. on March 26 in the Governor's Large Conference Room at the Capitol.**

Charles Bronson, Commissioner of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; Bob Butterworth, Secretary of the Florida Department of Children and Families; and Eric Smith, Commissioner of the Florida Department of Education, will also be in attendance.

The Florida Plan—produced with funding from the United Parcel Service Foundation—represents one of the first state-level applications of the DC Hunger Solutions pilot to End Childhood Hunger in the Nation's Capital.

The **Florida Partnership to End Childhood Hunger** says low-income families aren't using all their tax credits or food stamp benefits, among other things; and, children aren't surging in summer programs that provide nutritious meals while school is out. All told, more than \$1 billion goes unused from just three of the federal food and nutrition programs serving Florida.

**"We just can't be comfortable knowing tens of thousands of children will go to bed hungry at night," said Nelson, Honorary Chair of the Partnership. "We've got to get these dollars into our communities to help our children who cannot help themselves."**

The Partnership includes a broad spectrum of state-level business, nonprofit, faith-based and political leaders. That Plan unveils specific strategies for maximizing federal food assistance and is the first step in identifying and eliminating weaknesses in the current food-service delivery. The Plan will be an undertaking of two major nonprofits, Share Our Strength ([www.strength.org](http://www.strength.org)) and Florida Impact ([www.flimpact.org](http://www.flimpact.org)) with help from MGT of America and the Food Research and Action Center.

“If we work to channel more of these federal dollars into our communities by removing barriers to access and promoting awareness, we could effectively be the first state in the nation to end childhood hunger,” said Debra Susie, Executive Director of Florida Impact.

*For more information about The Florida Partnership to End Childhood Hunger, please visit [www.flimpact.org](http://www.flimpact.org).*