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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-2504

October 20, 2008

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The Honorable Robert Gates  
Secretary of Defense  
The Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Dear Mr. Secretary,

On June 20, 2008, the President signed into law S. 2420, the Federal Food Donation Act of 2008. This new statute encourages executive agencies and contractors of executive agencies to donate excess and "apparently wholesome" food to nonprofit organizations to help them feed food-insecure Americans. The law gives each agency 180 days to revise Federal Acquisition Regulations to encourage the donation of excess food.

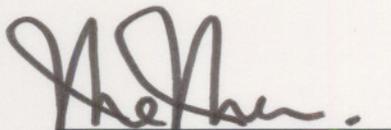
Because the Department of Defense purchases a great deal of food each year – over \$ 4.45 billion worth in fiscal year 2008, we wanted to bring this new law to your direct attention and urge you to do everything in your power to see that U.S. military installations are aware of the new federal recommendations and that they will follow through on their charge to donate excess food to local charities.

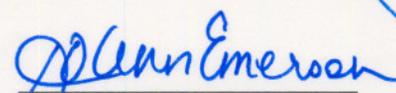
Food pantries across America are having a difficult time keeping enough food in stock to sufficiently help families in need. As economic conditions worsen in our country, these problems will only increase.

We ask that you provide us with a description of how the Defense Department plans to implement the Federal Food Donation Act of 2008. We look forward to hearing from you.

With respect, we are

Sincerely,

  
IKE SKELTON  
Member of Congress

  
JO ANN EMERSON  
Member of Congress

  
JAMES P. MCGOVERN  
Member of Congress