

**CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

4TH DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY

CONSTITUENT SERVICE CENTERS:

MONMOUTH  
112 Village Center Drive  
Freehold, NJ 07728-2510  
(732) 780-3035

OCEAN  
405 Route 539  
Plumsted, NJ 08514-2303  
(609) 286-2571; (732) 350-2300

MERCER  
4573 South Broad Street  
Hamilton, NJ 08620-2215  
(609) 585-7878

2373 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-3004  
(202) 225-3765

<http://chrissmith.house.gov>



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

SENIOR MEMBER, FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN, AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH,  
GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND  
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEE

WESTERN HEMISPHERE  
SUBCOMMITTEE

CO-CHAIRMAN, COMMISSION ON SECURITY  
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

CO-CHAIRMAN, CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE  
COMMISSION ON CHINA

DEAN, NEW JERSEY DELEGATION

Nutrition, supplementation during first thousand days of life—from conception to second birthday—radically saves women’s and children’s lives

# Ending hunger, malnutrition, building resilience—a comprehensive strategy

*U.S. Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ)*  
*Excerpts of Remarks During Floor Debate*  
*in the House of Representatives*  
*The Global Food Security Act of 2016—HR 1567*  
*April 12, 2016*

Mr. Speaker, The Global Food Security Act—HR 1567—authorizes a comprehensive, strategic approach for U.S. foreign assistance to developing countries to reduce poverty and hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, promote inclusive, sustainable agricultural-led economic growth, improve nutritional outcomes, especially for women and children and build resilience among vulnerable populations.

At its core, HR 1567 establishes a comprehensive global food security strategy that includes eight mutually reinforcing policy objectives and fifteen specific goals and actions designed to develop and implement a “whole of government strategy.”

Essential elements of the strategy include:

- benchmarks, timetables, performance metrics and monitoring and evaluations plans;
- clear and transparent selection criteria for target countries;
- support of inclusive value chain development with small scale producers , especially women;
- leverage of resources and expertise through partnerships with the private sector, farm organizations, cooperatives, civil society, faith based organizations and agricultural research and academic institutions;
- harnessing science, technology and innovation from a myriad of sources including the 24 Feed the Future Innovation Labs;
- support improvement of the nutritional status of women and children, particularly during the critical first 1,000 day window until a child reaches 2 years of age and with a focus on reducing child stunting, through nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive programs, including related water, sanitation and hygiene programs.

Indeed, there is perhaps no wiser and radically transformative investment that we could make in the human person than to concentrate on ensuring that sufficient nutrition and health assistance is given during

the first one thousand days of life: A thousand days that begins with conception, continues throughout pregnancy, includes that milestone event called birth and then finishes at roughly the second birthday of the child. Children who do not receive adequate nutrition in utero are far more likely to experience immune system deficiencies—making opportunistic infections more debilitating even fatal—and a large number of lifelong cognitive and physical deficiencies such as stunting.

UNICEF estimates that one in four children worldwide is stunted due to lack of adequate nutrition. By maximizing nutrition during the first 1000 days of life, we help ensure that the next 25,000 days or more in a person's life are more likely to be healthier and disease free.

One objective of HR 1567 is to “graduate” individuals and families and communities and nations from food aid dependency to self-sufficiency leading to a likely reduction in emergency food assistance over time. That's both humane and responsible stewardship of taxpayer funds.

By statutorily authorizing this existing program—which had its roots in the Bush Administration and was formalized by the Obama Administration—we are also statutorily enhancing congressional oversight by requiring the Administration to report to Congress. The bill requires rigorous monitoring, evaluation and congressional oversight of the global food security strategy and mandates a comprehensive report to ensure accountability and effectiveness.

The approach we have taken in the Global Food Security Act is fiscally disciplined—there is no additional cost to the US taxpayer. USAID will be authorized however to do more by more effectively leveraging our aid with that of other countries, the private sector, NGOs and, especially faith-based organizations, whose great work on the ground in so many different countries impacts so many lives.

As prime sponsor of HR 1567, let me convey my special thanks to prime Democrat co-sponsor Betty McCollum for her leadership, friendship and support.

I am deeply grateful to Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy and his extraordinary floor director Kelly Dixon for their pivotal support in the last Congress and this one for the Global Food Security Act—if passed today it will be the second time in two years. (The clock ran out on the bill in the Senate last congress.)

I am grateful as well for the strong and abiding support of Foreign Affairs Chairman Ed Royce and Ranking Member Eliot Engel—they have been tremendous. Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway made several important policy revisions and has been personally involved in the drafting of the bill—thank you Mr. Chairman. And a heartfelt thanks to original cosponsors Mr. Fortenberry, Ms. Bass, Mr. Crenshaw, Ms. DeLauro, Mr. Reichert, Mr. Cicilline, Mr. Smith of Washington and Mr. Paulsen.

And finally, a great big thanks to our professional staff members who worked hard to help bring this bill to the floor: Joan Condon and Doug Anderson at the Foreign Affairs Committee, Scott Graves, Bart Fischer and Jackie Barber at the Ag Committee, legislative counsel Mark Synnes, Jenn Holcomb in Betty McCollum's office, and Piero Tozzi from my subcommittee and my chief of staff Mary Noonan.