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Major General David Weishaar
The Adjutant General and Director of
Emergency Management & Homeland Security

Laura Kelly, Governor

State & Agency Partners:

Please allow this letter to serve as affirmation of the tremendous support and assistance we have received from The Outreach Program in our mission to augment the primary food banks serving the State of Kansas during the COVID-19 pandemic. To date we have purchased 3.2 million meals from Outreach in support of our mission.

Like other states, Kansas has an unprecedented number of underserved citizens experiencing joblessness and financial difficulties. The demands placed upon our food banks to meet these needs obligated us to provide whatever assistance we could muster. The three primary food banks which serve their local agency partners in Kansas all reported that in addition to the increased demands being placed upon them for food assistance, they were also facing skyrocketing food costs and reduced donations, and in some cases scarce food supply.

Thus the challenge to us was to identify a means of providing support without competing with our food bank providers for scarce food resources. Through research and collaboration, we identified Outreach as being a potential solution in providing for nutrient dense, shelf-stable food products which could be assembled, packaged, and distributed to the food banks without creating undue pressures or strains on their existing distribution networks.

Working with our partners in the Kansas National Guard, we are actively assembling, packaging, and distributing the Outreach "Pantry Packs" statewide in cooperation with our food banks. Under the auspices of the Outreach staff, soldiers from the Kansas National Guard are producing over 120K meals per day, then shipping them across the state to locations identified by the food banks. These meals are very popular with the food banks and those they serve, as each pantry pack contains 7 packages of meals in six varieties, which each contain 6 servings- an entire week's worth of food for an entire family! The process is very economical, with our costs averaging .30-.35 cents per meal.

I would encourage you to give consideration to The Outreach Program in meeting the needs of the underserved, as it has proven to be a highly effective means of serving the citizens of Kansas during these difficult times.

Respectfully,

Mark C. Willis, Deputy Logistics Section Chief
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