Statement by the President Upon Signing the National School Lunch Act.
June 4, 1946

TODAY, as I sign the National School Lunch Act, I feel that the Congress has acted with great wisdom in providing the basis for strengthening the nation through better nutrition for our school children. In my message to Congress last January, I pointed out that we have the technical knowledge to provide plenty of good food for every man, woman, and child in this country, but that despite our capacity to produce food we have often failed to distribute it as well as we should. This action by the Congress represents a basic forward step toward correcting that failure.

In the long view, no nation is any healthier than its children or more prosperous than its farmers; and in the National School Lunch Act, the Congress has contributed immeasurably both to the welfare of our farmers and the health of our children.

Under previous school lunch programs made possible by year-to-year authorizations we have been able to provide as many as six million children with nutritious lunches at noon. This has laid a good foundation for the permanent program. In the future, increasing numbers will benefit—and on a permanent basis.

I hope that all State and local authorities will cooperate fully with the United States Department of Agriculture in establishing the cooperative school lunch in every possible community.

Note: The National School Lunch Act is Public Law 396, 79th Congress (60 Stat. 230).