

## Support the Stop Child Hunger Act of 2021

The Stop Child Hunger Act of 2021 ([S. 1831](#) / [H.R. 3519](#)), introduced by Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and Representative Mike Levin (D-CA), would provide low-income families with children a Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card to purchase food. This bill builds on the success of the Pandemic EBT program and Summer EBT pilot program to provide additional support for families during the summer, school breaks, and unanticipated school closures. It does not replace school meals or the Summer Nutrition Programs.

### What is an EBT Card?

The EBT card is similar to a debit card and would provide nutrition resources to families with children qualified to receive free or reduced-price school meals. Families would use the EBT card to purchase food at retail stores during school breaks, summer break, and unanticipated school closures.

### Evaluation of USDA Summer EBT Pilot Project

In 2011, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) launched the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer for Children program (Summer EBT), a pilot project designed to test the impact of providing summer nutrition benefits through an EBT card to low-income families with school-age children. An evaluation of the pilot found that the Summer EBT card helped reduce food insecurity and improve nutrition. The pilot project also found that providing the benefits through a SNAP model — instead of being modeled after the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) — resulted in a higher redemption rate and lower administrative costs. Due to the pilot project's success, Congress invested additional resources into Summer EBT through the annual appropriations process. For more information about the pilot project, read FRAC's report.

### What Does the Bill Propose?

- Convert the Summer EBT pilot into a permanent, nationwide program.
- Authorize EBT cards for eligible households with a balance worth the daily value of school lunch and breakfast to cover school closures of more than five days, including summer and winter school breaks and unanticipated school closures.
- Allow eligible households to use EBT cards for the purchase of food only from retail food stores that have been approved for participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- Provide grants to states to support the development of data systems or upgrades to existing data systems to carry out this program.

### How Will the Bill Benefit Communities?

**Combat childhood hunger.** Food insecurity increases during school breaks when children lose access to free and reduced-price school meals. Providing an EBT card to families who rely on school breakfasts and lunches to make ends meet during the school year would give them additional resources to buy food that children would otherwise receive at school..

#### **Complement the Summer Nutrition Programs.**

The bill designs EBT to be a resource in addition to the existing Summer Nutrition Programs, which provide nutritious meals often in combination with educational and enrichment activities that keep children safe and supervised while their parents are working. It would also alleviate hunger when school is closed for more than five days during the school year.