

Support the Stop Child Hunger Act of 2023

The Stop Child Hunger Act of 2023 ([H.R. 4379](#)), introduced by Reps. Mike Levin (D-CA) and Jahana Hayes (D-CT) would expand the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (Summer EBT) Program, which provides families whose children are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals with an EBT card to purchase food. This bill would build on the new permanent, nationwide Summer EBT Program by increasing the amount of benefits a family receives and providing benefits during the school year for school breaks and unanticipated school closures.

How Does the Summer EBT Card Work?

The Summer EBT card is similar to a debit card, but it provides resources to purchase food at retail stores that are authorized to accept benefits for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Summer EBT cards provided by Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs) can be used at retailers authorized to accept benefits from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

The Summer EBT Program

As part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2023, Congress established a nationwide, permanent Summer EBT Program to begin the summer of 2024, which builds off of the success of previous Summer EBT pilots and the summer benefits provided by the Pandemic EBT Program. States as well as ITOs that administer WIC can operate the program. The benefit levels for the program are set at \$40 per month per eligible child and will be adjusted for inflation. Unlike previous program iterations, states and ITOs must cover 50 percent of their administrative costs to run the program.

What Does the Bill Propose?

- Expands the new permanent Summer EBT Program to provide benefits during all school breaks or virtual or hybrid instruction periods longer than five consecutive days, adding to the summer benefits that the program provides.
- Provides the value of the free school breakfast, lunch, and snack reimbursement rates for each day that the child receives benefits (for most states, this is about \$8.40 per day per child for the 2023–2024 school year, compared to the \$40 per month per child (adjusted annually for inflation) benefit level set in the Fiscal Year 2023 Omnibus).
- Covers 100 percent of the states' and ITOs' administrative costs (the current program requires states to cover 50 percent of these costs).
- Awards \$50 million for 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?

Combats childhood hunger: School meals help reduce hunger and ease the pressure on families' household food budgets. Expanding the Summer EBT Program to provide benefits to families when they lose access to these meals during school breaks and unanticipated school closures during the school year offers an important way to support kids and families year-round.

Increases local economic activity: Summer EBT provides families benefits that spend similarly to SNAP benefits. Every dollar spent on SNAP generates between **\$1.50 and \$1.80** in local economic activity during an economic downturn.