



Talking Points: Ripple Effects of SNAP Cuts on Families, States, and Local Economies

Note to advocates: Please refer to the legislation as “the passed reconciliation act” rather than using its formal title. Using neutral language helps avoid reinforcing messaging that may misrepresent the true impact of the package.

Overarching Messaging

- The recently passed budget reconciliation act will reverse decades of progress in the fight against hunger in America.
 - This new law [delivers a staggering blow](#) to hundreds of thousands of families with children, older adults, people with disabilities, and veterans in our state who rely on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to put food on the table, while simultaneously funding tax breaks for billionaires.
- SNAP is a powerful economic tool.
 - Cuts to the program will have harmful ripple effects, hurting state and local economies by reducing spending in communities, affecting jobs, and weakening local businesses that depend on consumer spending.
- Hunger will increase.
 - By cutting food assistance, it will increase poverty, worsen health and educational outcomes, and raise healthcare and state-level costs.
 - This crisis will only be exacerbated as states grapple with implementing new Medicaid provisions expected to leave millions uninsured.
 - Without Medicaid coverage and with reduced access to SNAP, families will face compounding harm

- SNAP is one of the few tools we have to stabilize families in moments of disruption. Weakening it will deepen hardship and overwhelm already stretched public resources.
- Cuts to SNAP directly undermine the Make America Healthy Again movement. Reducing access to food assistance limits families' ability to obtain nutritious food, driving an increase in diet-related diseases and worsening public health outcomes.
- Congress must use any legislative vehicle to do everything to mitigate the harm.

Impact on Populations:

- Children will bear the brunt. Nearly half of all SNAP households have children. When households lose SNAP benefits, children in the home lose their direct certification for free school meals that help fuel their health and learning.
- Some older adults will be cut off entirely, while others will experience reduced access to SNAP. Many will be forced to make the impossible choice between paying for food or medicine.
- Veterans, homeless individuals, and youth aging out of foster care will be harmed.
 - The expansion removes protections for veterans, forcing them to meet the 20-hour paid work-reporting requirements to keep their SNAP benefits.
 - It also targets homeless individuals and young people aging out of foster care, who already face major barriers to employment and housing.
 - These groups are being punished for circumstances beyond their control, not supported toward stability.
- This policy harms low-wage workers and fails rural communities.
 - People in low-wage or unstable jobs often cannot meet rigid work-reporting rules due to variable schedules, shift cuts, or seasonal work.
 - Rural areas already face higher food insecurity. Residents often work part-time due to caregiving demands and lack of job opportunities.

- Child care access continues to decline, particularly in rural regions, making it harder for families to meet the 20-hour work rule.
- Women and caregivers are hit the hardest.
 - Women, especially women of color, are overrepresented in low-paid, unstable jobs.
 - They carry a disproportionate share of caregiving responsibilities, both for children and older or disabled relatives.
 - These structural realities make them more likely to lose SNAP under the expanded time-limit policy.

Cost Shift on States and Counties:

- SNAP cuts will force counties to make impossible choices: cutting services, raising taxes, or reducing access to food assistance.
- The legislation dismantles the federal guarantee of food assistance and shifts substantial costs onto STATE, and in many cases, directly onto counties administering SNAP. This is an unfunded mandate for states and counties.
- [IF APPLICABLE] In county operated STATE, counties already cover half the non-federal match. Under the new provisions, our local governments will be pushed to the brink.
- The budget reconciliation act requires states to cover 75% of SNAP administrative costs, up from 50%.
- This will cause a local government crisis, leading to staff reductions and slower processing time for benefits.
- This shift hits especially hard as outdated technology and understaffing already drive rising error rates.
- Instead of supporting modernization, the law adds new mandates that increase complexity.
- With rising costs and less federal support, states risk falling into higher penalty tiers.

- SNAP is a vital resource in our community. It supports our neighbors when they need it most, boosts local businesses and the agricultural and food supply chain, and lifts families out of poverty
- Our counties cannot afford this financial burden.
- Overstretched food banks and charities can't begin to fill this gap. For every meal provided by a Feeding America food bank, SNAP provides nine.
- Forcing STATE counties to cover a growing share of SNAP costs, especially during economic downturns or disasters, will undermine access exactly when families need help most.

Impact on the Economy:

- Cutting SNAP doesn't just hurt people on the program – the ripple effects will be felt throughout our economy and communities.
- Over 250,000 SNAP retailers rely on those dollars to stay open, pay staff, and keep shelves stocked.
- Accepting SNAP allows food retailers to feed their community while also supporting their capability to pay utilities, employees, and pay local taxes that help support services like schools.
- And it's not just stores who benefit.
- SNAP customers use their benefits at farmers' markets, helping local farmers, roadside stands, and community-supported agricultural initiatives.
- In some states, participating farmers' markets match SNAP purchases with incentives for fresh produce, helping families access nutritious foods while boosting farm incomes.
- When families can use their benefits to purchase the food they need, it drives demand across our food systems.
- Cuts to SNAP mean job losses in grocery stores, less revenue for farmers, and further economic hardship for underserved communities.

Time Limits:

- Food for the hungry shouldn't have a time limit.
- The newly expanded SNAP's time limits do not promote employment. They penalize people and create massive red tape and administrative hurdles for those who are already working, caring for others, or struggling to find stable jobs with enough hours to meet strict requirements.
- Unpaid caregivers could lose their benefits if they can't find 20 hours of paid work each week.
- The budget reconciliation act expands time limits for parents of children ages 14 and older and eliminates exemptions for caregivers.
- The expansion of SNAP's time-limit work requirements from ages 18- 54 to ages 18–64 will result in thousands of people losing access to food assistance simply because they cannot document at least 20 hours of paid work each week.
- This policy fails to address real barriers to employment and ignores the complex realities people face.
- Time limits are ineffective and harmful.
 - Decades of research show they are ineffective at moving people into stable jobs.
 - They are administratively burdensome, straining state systems and diverting resources from effective support services.
 - The policy does not provide job offers, transportation, child care, or training, just a requirement and a penalty.
- Expanded time limits disregard caregivers and grandparents.
 - Many in this age group are raising grandchildren, caring for ill or disabled family members, or managing their own health conditions.
 - The new rules fail to account for unpaid caregiving, forcing people to choose between caregiving and maintaining access to food.
 - Single parents with children over age 14 will be subject to the time limit, even if they cannot secure stable child care.

Thrifty Food Plan:

- The budget reconciliation act locks families into outdated food budgets that won't keep up with rising food costs.
- It caps future updates to the Thrifty Food Plan, which is used to calculate SNAP benefit levels.
- This undermines the value of benefits, ensuring that SNAP purchasing power shrinks over time even as food prices rise.
- The average benefit is just \$6 per person per day.
- That doesn't go far for STATE shoppers today, and it won't stretch five years from now.
- For most households, SNAP already doesn't last through the month without hunger or being forced to sacrifice nutrition quality.
- This new law delivers a severe blow to STATE households already struggling to afford enough food.
- Maintaining the current value of the Thrifty Food Plan, regardless of future rising food prices, will negatively impact SNAP, Nutrition Assistance Programs for Puerto Ricco and American Samoa, the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer Program (Summer EBT), and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) as the monthly food benefit level is also tied to it.

Immigrant Households:

- The budget reconciliation act punishes lawfully present immigrant families and drives up hunger in households.
- It rolls back SNAP access for lawfully present humanitarian-based immigrants.
- When families are forced to skip meals or sacrifice nutrition, it affects children's health, learning, and long-term well-being.
- SNAP is one of the most effective tools we have to fight hunger, yet many immigrant families are either locked out of the program or too afraid to apply.

- This budget reconciliation act only reinforces those fears by spreading confusion, increasing stigma, and increasing hunger rates in already marginalized communities.
- If we want strong, healthy families and thriving communities, we must ensure that all families have access to the nutrition they need.
- Barring humanitarian-based lawfully present immigrants, such as refugees, asylees, and trafficking survivors, from SNAP benefits marks a stark and unprecedented departure from America's long-standing, bipartisan commitment to supporting those fleeing persecution.

SNAP-Ed:

- Cutting SNAP-Ed is counteractive to the MAHA movement.
- It eliminates a cost-effective way to help participants make healthier food choices and manage limited food budgets.
- SNAP helps STATE families buy the food they need for their health and wellbeing.
- When SNAP benefits are adequate, families can purchase more fruits and vegetables, meet dietary and cultural needs, and support long-term health.
- That's why cutting SNAP-Ed is short-sighted.
- SNAP-Ed gives people the tools to eat healthier and stretch tight budgets.
- Getting rid of it will only lead to worse health outcomes, more chronic disease, and higher health care costs down the line.

School Meals:

- Cuts to SNAP are cuts to school meals.
- When children lose their SNAP benefits, they lose their automatic eligibility for free school meals. Families can fill out school meal applications to find out if they are eligible to continue accessing school meals, but many children fall through the cracks of the application process.

- Not all families fill out school meal forms. Language or literacy barriers, fear of completing the form incorrectly, or concern over being identified as a low-income household prevents some families from submitting them.
- Additionally, it can be hard for parents or guardians to gather all the necessary paperwork to show annual income, if, for example, they have multiple part-time jobs or seasonal employment.
- The form requires households to not only disclose their employment income but also information about money they receive from child support, alimony, government assistance, and other income streams. Families may feel embarrassed or unwilling to share that level of information with their child's school.
- We've made real progress expanding access to free school meals through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP).
- CEP allows high-need schools to serve healthy meals to all students at no charge
- It's one of the most effective tools to fight child hunger and support health and learning.
- In STATE, # children students attended one of # [CEP schools during the 2024–2025 school year](#), a # percent increase from the previous year.
- But that progress is now at risk.
- Fewer SNAP-participating households means fewer children directly certified for free school meals and as a result, fewer schools eligible to operate CEP.
- Without CEP, schools will return to burdensome paperwork, unpaid meal debt, and turning hungry children away from the cafeteria.
- CEP is a proven pathway to making sure every child is nourished and ready to learn.
- Congress should build on that progress, not tear it down.

Summer EBT:

- Summer can be the hungriest time for children.
- [Summer EBT](#) is a proven way to ensure children can access the nutrition they need to grow, thrive, and return to school ready to learn.

- Texas Gov. Greg Abbott's line-item vetoed Summer EBT funding for 2027, citing the uncertain landscape of SNAP funding as the reason. That decision means over 3.7 million children from low-income households in Texas will not receive \$450 million in grocery benefits to combat summer hunger. No child should have to go hungry during the summer months.
- No parent should have to worry about how to feed their children.
- Summer EBT should be a no-brainer for states.

Rallying Cry:

- At [ORGANIZATION NAME], we are committed to doing everything we can to support those affected, and to ensure they can continue to access the nutrition they need.
- While the passage of this budget reconciliation act is disheartening, it's not the end of the story – or our advocacy.
- It's a reminder of how important it is to speak up for strong, effective federal nutrition programs.
- We'll continue to advocate for policies that reduce hunger and work towards a future where no one in STATE has to wonder where their next meal will come from.

Call to Action:

- With Congress adjourned for the August recess, now is the optimal time to schedule in-district meetings with your Members while they are at home (through September 2).
- This is a prime opportunity to organize site visits and meetings with your Members along with other community leaders to highlight the harmful impacts of provisions contained in the reconciliation package.
- Check [House](#) and [Senate](#) websites to find district schedulers to arrange meetings [in your district or state](#).

- Work to secure your Members of Congress as cosponsors on any legislation that repeals the harmful cuts to SNAP.
- Utilize FRAC [resources](#) for your visits.

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