

Joint Statement in Support of SNAP

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), our nation's most significant anti-hunger program, promotes economic security, health, and well-being. As you develop the 2023 Farm Bill, we stand ready to work with you to pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens SNAP.

SNAP responds effectively and efficiently to changes in need, whether due to economic downturns, natural disasters, or other disruptions. More recently, it has proven to be a crucial tool for mitigating food hardship and supporting local economies during the pandemic.

Indeed, research has found that the combination of the 2021 Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) update and the provision of temporary SNAP Emergency Allotments (EAs) reduced poverty in the last quarter of 2021 by 14.1 percent and child poverty by 21.8 percent in states that had EAs at the time.ⁱ

SNAP serves people of all ages and all types of communities—rural, urban, and suburban. Four in five SNAP households (81%) have a child, a person aged 60 or older or a person with disabilities.ⁱⁱ SNAP also has positive economic impacts. Each \$1 in SNAP during a downturn generates between \$1.50 and \$1.80 in economic activity that is felt throughout the food chain—from farmers and ranchers, food manufacturers and truckers, to grocers and store employees.ⁱⁱⁱ In addition, SNAP is an important support for workers who are paid low wages and for those looking for work. Most SNAP participants who can work do so.

SNAP has a critical role in improving the health of people across the nation, especially among the most vulnerable Americans. SNAP makes a positive difference over the life course of individuals, decreasing negative health outcomes in children and increasing economic self-sufficiency in women.^{iv}

Despite progress, however, hunger continues to affect too many people in the U.S. In 2021, more than 33.8 million Americans lived in households that struggled against food insecurity^v and more than one in six Americans turned to the charitable food sector for help.^{vi} In early February 2023, the U.S. Census Bureau PULSE survey found that 11.4% of respondent households reported they “sometimes” or “often” do not have enough to eat.^{vii}

With an end to SNAP Emergency Allotments, SNAP food benefits have decreased to an average of only about \$6 a person a day. Moreover, SNAP benefits are not available to all people with low-incomes who need them. Going forward it is vital to protect and further strengthen SNAP benefit adequacy and equitable access.

Our nation must do more to address hunger and SNAP has a key part to play. The 2023 Farm Bill presents opportunities to make further progress. We ask you to work to strengthen SNAP and protect the program from cuts or other harmful changes.

National Organizations

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP)

Feeding America

Food Research & Action Center (FRAC)

Share Our Strength

ⁱLaura Wheaton and Danielle Kwon, “Effect of the Reevaluated Thrifty Food Plan and Emergency Allotments on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Benefits and Poverty,” Urban Institute, August 2022, https://www.urban.org/research/publication/effect-reevaluated-thrifty-food-plan-and-emergency-allotments-supplemental?utm_source=urban_newsletters&utm_campaign=UIU

ⁱⁱSee “Characteristics of U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Households: Fiscal Year 2020,” USDA, November 2022, <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/Characteristics2020-Summary.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱSee Patrick Canning and Brian Stacy, “The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Economy: New Estimates of the SNAP Multiplier,” USDA Economic Research Service, July 2019, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/93529/err-265.pdf?v=2789.4> (Relevant research summarized at Table 1, p.7)

^{iv}See Stephanie Ettinger de Cuba et al., “Loss of SNAP Is Associated with Food Insecurity and Poor Health in Working Families with Young Children,” HEALTH AFFAIRS 38, NO. 5 pp.765–773, 2019, <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/epdf/10.1377/hlthaff.2018.05265>

^vAlisha Coleman-Jensen, Matthew P. Rabbitt, Christian A. Gregory, and Anita Singh, USDA Economic Research Service, September 2022, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/104656/err-309.pdf?v=5832.6>

^{vi}Poonam Gupta, Julio Salas, and Elaine Waxman, “Two Years into the Pandemic, Charitable Food Remains a Key Resource for One in Six Adults,” Urban Institute, May 2022, <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Two%20Years%20into%20the%20Pandemic%2C%20Charitable%20Food%20Remains%20a%20Key%20Resource%20for%20One%20in%20Six%20Adults.pdf>

^{vii}See “Week 54 Household Pulse Survey: February 1 - February 13,” U.S. Census Bureau, February 22, 2023, <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2023/demo/hhp/hhp54.html> (Based on data reported at Food Sufficiency and Food Security Table 1)