



Friday, April 4, 2025

**To:** Democratic Offices, House Agriculture Committee

**From:** Britton T. Burdick, Communications Director, House Agriculture Committee

**Subject:** Bringing SNAP, Reconciliation and Tariffs Home for the April District Work Period

## Overview

Democratic members are encouraged to use the April district work period to deliver a unified message: We want to pass a bipartisan five-year farm bill to give farmers the certainty and stability they need – and Republican plans to slash SNAP by \$230 billion to pay for tax cuts for billionaires and large corporations jeopardize the farm bill. Meanwhile, the Trump administration's world trade war is putting farmers under immense pressure – making a bipartisan farm bill more necessary than ever.

## Trump Creating Chaos and Uncertainty in Farm Country

The Trump administration has made a mess of USDA programs and services. From funding freezes and mass layoffs to defunding local food systems and canceling food deliveries to food banks, our food and agriculture systems are at risk.

Decimating SNAP to pay for tax cuts for wealthy individuals and giant corporations adds insult to injury by undermining the bipartisan farm bill that could provide farmers with the stability and certainty they need.

## Cutting SNAP Hurts Farmers and Families

The House Republicans' budget resolution (H.Con.Res.14) included instructions to the House Committee on Agriculture to cut programs in its jurisdiction by a minimum of \$230 billion. This will result in massive cuts to SNAP, our nation's most efficient and effective anti-poverty tool and a critical part of the farm bill, taking food off the tables of families and causing painful ramifications across the food supply chain and farm country.

## How SNAP Cuts Hurt Farmers

- **Jeopardizes the Farm Bill** – Right now, farmers, ranchers and producers need the certainty that a farm bill provides. Massive cuts to SNAP jeopardize a farm bill being passed this year adding further instability to farm country.

- **Eliminates \$30 billion in Farm Revenue** – Cutting SNAP by \$230 billion would reduce farm revenue by \$30 billion, causing additional harm to an already struggling farm economy.<sup>1</sup>
- **Impacts Rural Communities Hardest** – Cuts would hit rural America hardest. SNAP's economic impact is particularly strong in [rural communities and small towns](#), where people [participate at higher rates than in urban areas](#), and where SNAP dollars provide even [higher returns to the local economy](#).

## How SNAP Cuts Hurt Families

- More than 42 million Americans participate in SNAP each month.
- 80 percent of SNAP households include a child, senior (aged 60+) or disabled person.
- 16.9 million (40 percent) SNAP participants are children.
- 7.8 million (18 percent) SNAP participants are seniors (aged 60+).
- 4.5 million (11 percent) SNAP participants are people with disabilities (below 60).

Find SNAP participation by congressional district [here](#) (USDA) and [here](#) (Food Research & Action Council [FRAC]).

## How SNAP Cuts Hurt the Economy

Cuts to SNAP would have significant negative impacts on the farmers who grow the food, manufacturers that package it, truckers who distribute it and stores and small businesses in our communities that sell it:

- **SNAP dollars Stimulate the Economy** – Every \$1.00 in SNAP benefits generates an additional \$1.50 in economic activity.
- **SNAP Creates Jobs** – In 2020 alone, SNAP [created nearly 45,000 new jobs](#) in supporting industries, including agriculture, manufacturing, transportation, and municipal services.
- **Supports Critical Industries** – SNAP also [supported 200,000 grocery industry jobs](#) in 2020, with wages totaling more than \$6.7 billion.

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<sup>1</sup> USDA [estimates](#) that farmers receive nearly a quarter of every dollar spent on food at home, and the latest [research](#) indicates that SNAP participants make up in food purchases roughly half of every dollar they lose in SNAP benefits by cutting back on other basic needs like housing or medical care. That means a \$230 billion SNAP cut would have a direct hit to the farm sector of approximately \$30 billion.

## Trump's Tariffs Increase Uncertainty for Agriculture Industry

On April 2, 2025, President Trump launched a world trade war that has already changed the global economic outlook.

- The new tariffs raise the effective U.S. tariff rate to 22.5 percent, the highest since 1909.
- In the short term, the tariffs will cost the average household \$3,800.
- Farm groups have been [largely critical of Trump's tariffs](#).
- During Trump's 2018-2019 trade war, U.S. farmers lost nearly \$30 billion in market share.
- The American Farm Bureau Federation estimates that [\\$30 billion worth of U.S. agricultural exports were already under threat](#) of retaliatory tariffs from Mexico, Canada and China – before “Liberation Day” opened up farmers to retaliation from essentially every country on earth.
- [Steel mills](#), [automakers](#) and [farm equipment manufacturers](#) have experienced layoffs, price hikes and softening demand since Trump launched his global trade war.

All of this is happening at a time when farmers, heavily reliant on global trade, are under increasing financial pressure at home. USDA layoffs and funding freezes, the cancelations of farm-to-school and farm-to-food bank programs and looming cuts to SNAP all threaten the bottom lines of farmers across the country.

## Getting the Word Out

Most people are too busy living their lives to track the day-to-day developments of House Republicans and the Trump administration. We must ensure they know what their government is doing – the good, the bad and the ugly – and how it affects them locally. Therefore, we strongly encourage members to hold events during the April district work period to help get the word out.

## Sample Events

### Farm Stakeholder Roundtable

- Meet with your local or state farm bureau, farmers union chapter or commodity group(s) to discuss their needs.
- Invite press to observe the roundtable and offer Q&A at the end.
- Livestream the roundtable on social media.
- Potential topics of conversation:
  - Tariffs and impacts on producers

- Port fees/ship tax
- Cutting SNAP in reconciliation and why that's bad for the bipartisan farm bill
- USDA layoffs and disruptions to USDA funding
- What farmers need to be successful in 2025 and beyond

### **SNAP and the Economy Press Conference**

- Hold a press conference on SNAP's economic benefits.
- Invite grocery store, farmer, and trucker representatives.
- Livestream the press conference on social media.
- Potential topics of conversation:
  - Every \$1 invested in SNAP generates \$1.50 in economic activity.
  - Cutting SNAP by \$230 billion will result in \$30 billion in lost income for farmers.
  - SNAP supports job creation: hundreds of thousands throughout the supply chain.
  - SNAP has a stronger economic effect in rural communities.

### **Benefits Over Billionaires Press Conference**

- Hold a press conference on the Republican budget.
- Invite local stakeholders who would be affected by SNAP and Medicaid cuts.
- Livestream the press conference on social media.
- Potential topics of conversation:
  - Cutting SNAP and Medicaid to pay for tax breaks for billionaires will make America sicker and hungrier so the rich can get richer.

### **School Cafeteria Press Conference**

- Hold a press conference at a local cafeteria on the impact of [SNAP cuts on school meals](#) and the pressure that SNAP cuts, in addition to recent LFS and LFPA cuts, will create on school food programs.
- Invite a local school nutrition professional ("lunch lady"), a parent whose child benefited from getting SNAP and lunches and local farmer who participated in the LFS program.
- Livestream the press conference on social media.
- Potential topics of conversation:
  - How proposed cuts to SNAP in reconciliation create more red tape for families and make it harder for families to obtain free or reduced-price school meals, Summer EBT, or WIC benefits.
  - Pride local farmers take in feeding their community.
  - Senselessness of taking fresh, local food out of schools.

### **Food Bank Press Conference**

- Hold a press conference at a local or regional food bank.
- Invite representatives from area food banks, including church food pantries and a farmer who helped supply food (via LFPA) to food bank(s).
- Livestream the press conference on social media.

- Potential topics of conversation:
  - Importance of TEFAP and LFPA for feeding communities.
  - Rising demand for food provided at food banks.
  - Litany of federal cuts choking off the resources food banks rely on.
  - Looming SNAP cuts will make things much, much worse.

### Cost of Living Press Conference

- Hold a press conference on the state of the agriculture economy and the increased cost of living.
- Invite grocery store, restaurant owner, farmer, and trucker representatives.
- Livestream the press conference on social media.
- Potential topics of conversation:
  - The cost of living is too high for Americans.
  - From the price of eggs to the price of gas, we should be strengthening the farm supply chain to lower costs for American families, not weakening it.
  - The tariffs President Trump is implementing will cause shockwaves throughout the entire agriculture supply chain and increase input costs for family farmers and small business owners.

### Sample Social Copy

- President Trump and congressional Republicans want to cut SNAP by \$230 billion and add trillions to the deficit so they can pay for tax breaks for billionaires and large corporations. I think billionaires are doing just fine and we should focus on helping working families.
- Maybe instead of cutting SNAP by \$230 billion to pay for tax handouts to billionaires, Republicans could think about ways to help level the playing field for small farmers – like passing a bipartisan farm bill.
- Trump's tariffs are wreaking havoc on the economy. Input costs for farmers are up, food costs are up, and now they might get even more expensive. We need common sense, not added taxes on the goods Americans buy.
- Can we all agree that farm country has experienced enough turmoil and chaos recently? Instead of threatening the farm bill with cuts to critical farm bill programs like SNAP, we should focus on working together to pass the bipartisan bill farmers need.
- With all the uncertainty in farm country, there is a real need for a bipartisan, five-year farm bill. So why are Republicans pushing for huge cuts to farm bill nutrition programs, like SNAP, to pay for tax cuts to billionaires? That makes passing a farm bill a lot harder.

- The American people deserve a government that works for them. Decimating the farm bill programs that help feed America not only makes us sicker and poorer, it makes passing a bipartisan farm bill harder.
- Losing a job or a medical emergency might put you in a financial pinch, and when times are tough, SNAP helps us keep food on the table. Taking \$230 billion away from hungry families to pay for tax breaks for billionaires is inexcusable.
- Budget reconciliation. The Byrd rule. Parliamentary privilege. Sounds confusing, right? What Republicans are trying to do with their budget is simple: take food away from hungry children and veterans to pay for tax breaks for billionaires. I'm a "no" on that.
- A bipartisan farm bill could deliver much-needed resources for farmers, rural communities and hungry families across the country. I'd like an opportunity to vote for that bill. So why are Republicans trying to undermine it by using their partisan budget to make massive cuts to farm bill programs?

## Sample Direct-to-Cameras

Recording conversational direct-to-camera (DTC) content can be a good way to engage with audiences and constituents. Consider crafting short 30-60 second scripts adhering to the following themes and then posting them on social media and embedding them in e-newsletters.

Be sure to record DTC content in a quiet place or using equipment that won't pick up unwanted or distracting background noise, have the subject be properly lit and make direct eye contact with the camera (try to avoid glancing off camera at notes/talking points). And always remember to use closed captions.

## Republican Budget DTC

- "Republicans want to cut SNAP by \$230 billion to pay for tax cuts for billionaires and large corporations. This spells trouble for America's farmers and businesses, because every \$1 invested in SNAP creates about \$1.50 in value. That's because when you go grocery shopping, you don't just pay for the food in your cart – every \$1 you spend helps pay for the wage of the grocery store clerk, the trucker who delivered the food to the store, the manufacture who made the food packaging and the farmer who grew it. That's hundreds of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in farm income that will be lost if Republicans and their wealthy donors like Elon Musk get their way."

## Trump's Tariffs DTC

- "America's farmers are particularly vulnerable to Trump's trade war. Not only do tariffs on foreign goods make it more expensive for American farms to operate by

making things like fertilizer more expensive, but tariffs also open our farmers up to retaliation by countries like China, who stop buying American-grown soybeans and corn and beef and wheat when they get into a trade war with Trump. The last time Trump started a trade war it cost U.S. farmers around \$30 billion – and the picture looks even worse this time around. Meanwhile, American consumers are getting squeezed as prices go up on everything from the fuel we put in our cars to the food we buy at the grocery store. This chaotic tariff policy is bad for farm country and communities across America.”

## Talking Points

### Republican Tax Billionaire Giveaway and SNAP Cuts

- House Republicans propose to cut SNAP by \$230 billion to pay for tax cuts for wealthy individuals and large corporations.
- Cutting the programs families spend on food would ripple throughout the supply chain. Hundreds of thousands of jobs rely on money being spent on food.
  - This puts at risk the over 200,000 jobs in farming, manufacturing, transportation and grocery supported by SNAP.
- SNAP is a farm bill program. Let’s help farmers by giving them long-term certainty and stability. That is what the farm bill does.
- Republicans need to be careful when swinging their reconciliation wrecking ball. Beyond costing farmers \$30 billion – it may end up sinking the entire farm bill that farmers rely on for crop insurance and other things.
- You’re doing farmers a disservice by cutting farm bill programs before the farm bill has even been negotiated.

### Trump Tariffs

- Tariff whiplash is causing uncertainty in farm country and the manufacturing, retail and energy sectors.
- Economists estimate that these tariffs will cost the average American family NEARLY \$4,000 per year – and that cost burden falls harder on middle- and working-class families.
- These new taxes will also be a disaster for America’s family farmers.



- An American Farm Bureau Federation analysis estimated that \$30 billion in U.S.-produced agricultural goods could be on the hook for retaliatory tariffs.
- Tariffs may be temporary, but they have long-term consequences. American farmers never fully got back the markets they lost during Trump's first trade war.
- They had to spend money to develop new markets in other countries; they had to build new relationships with new governments and new business partners abroad.
- A trade war will result in higher prices for American consumers or farmers – a lose-lose situation.

## Trump Administration / USDA Policy Blunders

- I am getting calls and texts every day from farmers.
- USDA contracts that help farmers invest in their operations are not being honored.
- Programs that helped farmers supply schools and food banks with locally grown food have been cut by \$1 billion.
- \$500 million from the Emergency Food Program (TEFAP), which helps food banks buy the food they distribute, has been disrupted. This is money that buys the proteins and specialty crops grown by American farmers.
- Haphazard layoffs at USDA jeopardize our ability to serve farmers and keep our agriculture system the safest and most productive in the world.
- Research programs at universities that provide U.S. producers with the latest cutting-edge biotechnology and agricultural practices are being closed.
- ARS research positions that were finally being filled around the country have now seen those scientists fired.
- Dismantling USAID has potentially lost U.S. farmers a multi-billion-dollar market for their commodities.
- Farmers are dealing with tight margins right now, and this chaos and uncertainty are not lowering costs for anybody.



## Resources

- A recent survey shows that nearly [three in five oppose an extension of the 2017 Republican tax law](#), and an even greater share oppose it when framed as a new law to give tax breaks to the wealthy.
- Cuts to [SNAP are unpopular](#), including for a majority (60 percent) of Trump voters.
- Ranking Member Craig's statement on \$230 billion in SNAP cuts: <https://democrats-agriculture.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=2913>
- Congresswoman Jahana Hayes leads letter opposing \$230 billion in SNAP cuts: <https://democrats-agriculture.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=2925>
- Ranking Member Craig's statement on Trump's word trade war: <https://democrats-agriculture.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=2932>
- Agriculture Democrats' letter on Trump's tariffs: <https://democrats-agriculture.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=2922>
- What farmers are saying about tariffs: <https://democrats-agriculture.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=2919>
- Views of tariffs and Trump's tariff plan are becoming increasingly negative, with [tariffs being a top driver for those disapproving of Trump's economic handling](#).
  - Higher costs and trade wars are the most concerning outcomes of Trump's tariffs, with growing shares believing tariffs will hurt American workers.