



May 9, 2025

**To:** Interested Democratic Offices

**From:** Democratic Staff, House Agriculture Committee

**Subject:** The Republican Plan to Cut Billions from SNAP Hurts Families and Farmers

## Overview

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. These cuts are expected to come entirely from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), our nation's most efficient and effective anti-poverty tool and a critical part of the farm bill. Several proposals on how to cut SNAP have been suggested by Republicans; what each has in common is that they will take food assistance away from families in need and have painful ramifications that will be felt across the food supply chain and farm country.

## Who Will Be Hurt by SNAP Cuts?

### Vulnerable Americans Facing High Food Costs

- 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 million (40 percent) SNAP participants are children.
- 8 million (20 percent) SNAP participants are seniors (aged 60+).
- 4 million (10 percent) SNAP participants are people with disabilities (below 60).
- 1.2 million SNAP participants are veterans.

Find SNAP participation by congressional district (118<sup>th</sup>) [here](#) (USDA) and [here](#) (Food Research & Action Council [FRAC]). Find estimated number of veterans participating in SNAP by state [here](#).

### Local Grocers and Farmers

- In 2023 alone, 25,000 small and mid-sized grocers, butchers, bakeries, and produce markets were supported by \$3.9 billion in SNAP purchases.
- 6,700 farmers markets and farmers selling directly to consumers were supported by \$70 million in SNAP purchases.
- 673 thousand households made at least one purchase from a farmer or farmers market using SNAP benefits.

Find current SNAP retailers by zip code [here](#), by state [here](#), and by county [here](#). The number of grocery and industry jobs supported by SNAP by State and congressional district (119<sup>th</sup>) can be found [here](#).

## How Does Cutting SNAP Impact Farm Country?

- **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** – Farmers receive nearly [a quarter of every dollar](#) spent on food at home and SNAP participants [cut their food purchases by roughly half](#) for every dollar that they lose in benefits. That means that cutting SNAP by \$230 billion would **take away \$30 billion in revenue from farmers and ranchers**, causing additional harm to an already struggling farm economy.
- **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 Does Cutting SNAP Harm 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 2024, SNAP [created nearly 139,000 new jobs](#) in supporting industries, including agriculture, manufacturing, transportation, and municipal services, with direct wages totaling \$9.8 billion.
- **Supports Critical Industries** – SNAP is [responsible for 249,700 grocery industry jobs](#) annually, with direct wages totaling \$10.3 billion.
- **Generates Federal, State and Local Tax Revenue** – The more [than \\$20 billion in direct wages](#) derived from the 388,700 grocery and supporting industry jobs supported by SNAP result in over \$4.5 billion in state and federal tax revenue per year.
- **Cuts Risk Disproportionate Harm Rural Grocers** – [27,000 retailers in largely rural counties have the highest risk of being harmed by SNAP cuts](#), due to the program's significant economic impact in rural communities.

## How House Republicans Plan to Cut SNAP

### Mandate State Cost-Share for SNAP Benefits

The Federal government covers 100 percent of SNAP benefits while costs for the administration of the program are split 50-50 with States. States have never been required to pay for SNAP benefits, but Republicans are proposing to require them to do so on top of the existing administrative cost share. Creating a new unfunded mandate requiring States to pay for a portion of benefits would force States to cut SNAP benefits, severely restrict program eligibility, or both.

States are not in a financial position to absorb significant increases in costs. In fiscal year 2024, tax revenue fell in 40 States, and [many are already projecting budget shortfalls](#). States with [lower incomes and higher poverty rates](#), like Louisiana, Mississippi and Kentucky, would be disproportionately impacted.

Find State-by-State estimates of what a SNAP benefit cost-share of 5, 10, and 25 percent would mean [here](#) and 22.5 percent [here](#).

### Take Food Away from People via New, Expanded Work Reporting Requirements

House Republicans have also suggested expanding SNAP's existing, harsh work reporting requirements. SNAP's time-limit on benefits prevents individuals considered "able-bodied adults without dependents" from receiving SNAP more than three months every three years unless they can find work. The vast majority of people subject to the time limit [have a high school education or less](#), [have incomes below 50 percent of the Federal poverty line](#) and face entrenched barriers to work, like homelessness,<sup>1</sup> underlying mental or physical disabilities or lack of access to transportation.

Republican proposals to add new, extended work requirements include raising the age for those subject to SNAP's time-limit to 65, restricting or eliminating States' ability to use discretionary exemptions and waivers when jobs are scarce and imposing the time-limit on families with children. In total, nearly **11 million people, including more than 4 million children and 2 million seniors and adults with disabilities, live in households that would be at risk of benefit cuts**.

District and state-level estimates of how many SNAP participants could lose their SNAP benefits due to these changes can be found [here](#).

### Cut Benefits and Increase the Cost of Food for Every SNAP Participant

Republicans have proposed cutting SNAP benefits by \$36 billion for all SNAP participants by freezing the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP), which is the basis of SNAP benefits, outside of inflation

---

<sup>1</sup> The implementation of the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023, which included an exemption for homeless individuals, may impact the number of homeless individuals impacted by the time-limit for years FY2024-FY2030.

adjustments. TFP updates are currently required by law to occur every five years to account for changes in dietary guidance and the latest data on food prices, food composition, and consumption patterns.

Preventing Thrifty Food Plan reevaluations from increasing benefits would **cut benefits and increase food costs** by an average of **\$7 per person per month, rising to \$15 per person per month in 2032**. While a \$7 cut may seem small, SNAP benefits only average only about \$6 per person per day. A cut of \$7 would be equivalent to losing an entire day's worth of benefits every month (or two days' worth of benefits every month starting in 2032). For families counting pennies, that adds up.

This change would cut benefits for all SNAP participants, including:

- **\$18 billion** in benefit cuts for households with children,
- **\$9 billion** in benefit cuts for households with young children (under age 5),
- **\$5 billion** in benefit cuts for households with older adults,
- **\$6 billion** in benefit cuts for households with people with disabilities, and
- **\$11 billion** in benefit cuts for working families.

This policy would also result in cuts other critical programs that are indexed to the TFP, including:

- **\$100 million in cuts to The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)**, which provides food for food banks and food pantries to distribute to individuals and families.
- **\$700 million in cuts to Puerto Rico's Nutrition Assistance Program** block grant.
- **\$500 million in cuts to Summer EBT**, or SUN Bucks, which provides food assistance to children in low-income families during the summer when schools are closed.

State-by-State estimates of the proposed SNAP benefit cuts can be found [here](#).

## **"Crack Down" on "Waste, Fraud and Abuse"**

SNAP takes fraud – or intentional violations – very seriously and imposes harsh penalties or disqualification on retailers or recipients who commit them. Criminal charges are also a possibility in large scale cases. These types of violations are rare, and do not add up to enough to pay for the \$230 billion in cuts that Republicans have prescribed, even if you could prevent them all. Still, Republicans claim the program is rife with "waste, fraud and abuse" as an excuse to add even more red tape to SNAP, generating "savings" by making it too difficult for people to participate in the program.

## **Sample Talking Points**

### **Impacts on Farm Country**

- Democrats support getting a farm bill passed this year that provides desperately needed certainty to farmers, ranchers and producers in every corner of the country. By making these historic cuts to SNAP, Republicans are putting the farm bill in jeopardy and showing family farmers that tax breaks for billionaires come before certainty for farm country.

- Cutting SNAP by \$230 billion would take \$30 billion in revenue away from farmers and ranchers, causing additional harm to an already struggling farm economy.
- If Republicans decimate these farm bill programs, passing a new bipartisan farm bill that enhances the farm safety net and invests in rural communities gets harder.

## Impacts on the Economy and Costs

- Democrats support getting a farm bill passed this year that provides desperately needed certainty to family farmers and protects SNAP which creates jobs and is an economic driver, returning \$1.50 to our communities for every \$1.00 invested. By supporting these cuts to SNAP, the GOP are jeopardizing the farm bill, choosing tax breaks for billionaires over food assistance for children and seniors across our country.
- If Republicans are successful at slashing food assistance via changes to the Thrifty Food Plan, vulnerable Americans depending on SNAP will lose an entire day's worth of benefits every month (rising to two days' worth in 2032).
- SNAP dollars stimulate the economy. Every \$1.00 invested in SNAP generates \$1.50 in economic activity. Making these cuts would hurt the farmers who grow the food, manufacturers who package it, truckers who distribute it, and the small businesses in our communities that sell it.
- Every year, SNAP supports approximately 388,000 grocery jobs and jobs in related industries, like agriculture and transportation, that earn over \$20 billion in direct wages, resulting in over \$4.5 billion in state and federal tax revenue.
- As many as 27,000 retailers in largely rural counties have the highest risk of being harmed by food assistance cuts, because people in rural areas use the program to afford food at local grocery stores.

## Impacts on Nutrition

- Democrats support getting a farm bill passed this year that provides desperately needed certainty to family farmers and protects food assistance so that some of the most vulnerable in our communities – seniors, children, and the disabled – can keep food on the table. Republicans are jeopardizing the farm bill and putting tax cuts for billionaires ahead of the children, seniors, and veterans having affordable food.
- Decimating farm bill nutrition programs to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy would hurt economic growth and farm income and take food out of the mouths of hungry children.
- 1 in 8 Americans, including 16 million children, 8 million seniors, and 4 million people with disabilities, rely on SNAP to put food on the table. Slashing these basic needs programs

and making groceries less affordable at a time when food, housing, and other costs remain high is unacceptable.

- Each month, 1.2 million veterans depend on food assistance to keep food on their tables and could face higher food costs because of cuts to SNAP.
- Cutting farm bill nutrition programs does not make life affordable for everyday people. Instead of taking food assistance away from children and Americans with disabilities, we should ask the wealthy to pay what they owe in taxes. We should be focused on helping working people and rural economies, not cutting basic needs programs.

## Resources

- Hart Research polling shows that [SNAP cuts are unpopular](#), even among a majority of Trump voters.
- [District-level SNAP participation data](#) from USDA (118<sup>th</sup> congressional districts).
- [District-level SNAP participation data](#) from FRAC analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey for 2023 (118<sup>th</sup> congressional districts).
- [District \(119<sup>th</sup>\) and state-level estimates of grocery and industry jobs supported by SNAP](#) (National Grocers Association).
- [District-level data for SNAP and Medicaid participants from the Budget Committee](#).
- [State-by-state estimates of the burden of SNAP benefit cost-share](#) by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.
- [District & state-level estimates of the impact of expanding work reporting requirements, including on children and seniors](#), by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.
- [County-level data on SNAP retailers and the economic impact of SNAP cuts on grocers](#) by the Center for American Progress.
- [State-by-state estimates of the number of children impacted](#) and [analysis showing that rural States face the deepest cuts](#) by SNAP cuts by the Century Foundation.