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**U.S. House of Representatives**  
**Committee on Agriculture**  
**Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight, and**  
**Department Operations**  
**Room 1301, Longworth House Office Building**  
**Washington, DC 20515-6001**

(202) 225-2171

July 26, 2019

The Honorable Sonny Perdue  
Secretary of Agriculture  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

As Chair of the Nutrition, Oversight, and Department Operations Subcommittee of the House Agriculture Committee, I write to express strong opposition to the proposed rule published in the Federal Register on July 24, 2019, titled, "*Revision of Categorical Eligibility in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)*" (84 Fed. Reg. 35570). Given the estimated adverse impact of this rule to at least 3 million people, and indirect affect to millions more, I urge you to extend the 60-day comment period to 90 days to allow for those populations put in harm's way by this rule to further evaluate its provisions and provide USDA with substantive feedback.

By your own admission, "the proposed rule may also negatively impact food security and reduce the savings rates among those individuals who do not meet the income and resource eligibility requirements for SNAP." Mr. Secretary, you are correct. Your proposal is mean-spirited and will make hunger in America worse.

Broad-based categorical eligibility (BBCE) provides a hand up so that working families who earn a modest income can escape the cycle of poverty. The proposed changes will kick millions of people off SNAP, including an estimated 13 percent of seniors, 535,000 children, and hundreds of thousands of working families that rely on this program. It removes existing flexibilities for the 43 states and territories currently using BBCE to tailor critical anti-hunger assistance to best meet the needs of their own populations. Further, as stated in your proposal, "households that remain eligible for SNAP and new SNAP applicants will face additional burden associated with the application process". SNAP authorized grocers are also projected to lose an estimated \$3 billion in sales at time when research has proven to show \$1 in SNAP generates \$1.79 in economic activity. As I've said before, this Administration often talks about states'

As I've said before, this Administration often talks about states' rights and the importance of state flexibility, however when it comes to putting that rhetoric into practice for SNAP, your policies take the opposite position.

More alarming are your recent comments in *Politico*, in which you indicate you believe the millions of people your proposed rule will kick off SNAP will be unaffected because they have additional means, assets and resources. Mr. Secretary, no one in America wants to be on SNAP. To suggest otherwise is offensive and out of touch.

For years, Congress has debated this issue and rejected the inclusion of similar provisions in recent farm bills. Your continued attack on poor people ignores the clearly-stated will of Congress and amounts to an end-run by the Administration of the legislative process.

Mr. Secretary, what ever happened to your promise of "Do Right and Feed Everyone"?

I ask for an immediate extension of the comment period from 60 days to 120 days to allow the opportunity to better inform USDA of the hardships that will result if the Department moves forward with this harmful proposal.

Sincerely,



Marcia L. Fudge  
Chair

Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight and Department Operations