



Congressman David Price
2108 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Price,

The undersigned organizations in District 4 are writing to support you in rejecting any proposals in the 2018 Farm Bill that cut funding to SNAP or other federal nutrition programs; shift costs to the states; or otherwise reduce benefits affecting low-income families, children, workers, the unemployed, or the elderly.

North Carolina is the 10th hungriest state in the nation.¹ While average monthly SNAP benefits are nominal — about \$119 per household in North Carolina — the program is vital to helping people access nutritious food. Even with more than 1.5 million North Carolinians (15% of the state’s population) relying on SNAP to pay for their groceries,² food insecurity still persists across the state. With 1 in 6 people facing the double burden of poverty and food insecurity, SNAP provides a critical safety net for those in need.

SNAP helps the most vulnerable in our state. In North Carolina, SNAP benefits predominantly go to households with children, seniors, or people with disabilities.³ About half of SNAP recipients are in working families, yet still struggle to make ends meet.⁴ SNAP needs to remain means-tested, and must continue to allow all those who need food benefits to access them.

SNAP participation contributes to improved nutrition and positive long-term health outcomes. SNAP participation for six months can increase food security in a household by up to 10%.⁵ In addition, individuals who had access to food stamps in early childhood have a lower risk of obesity, high blood pressure, heart disease, and diabetes as adults.⁶ In addition, access to SNAP is associated with increased utilization of preventive care, which can contribute to lower healthcare costs overall.⁷ Specifically, a study at the national level found that SNAP participation was associated with a \$1400 reduction per household in yearly healthcare expenditures.⁸

¹ USDA’s 2016 Report on Food Insecurity, 3-year average (2014-20156).

² CBPP, North Carolina SNAP fact sheet. 2017.

³ CBPP analysis of data from USDA Food and Nutrition Service, FY 2015.

⁴ CBPP analysis of data from USDA Food and Nutrition Service, FY 2015.

⁵ USDA, Food & Nutrition Service. Measuring the Effect of SNAP participation on food security, 2013.

⁶ Northwestern Institute for Policy Research. Jan 2017.

⁷ University of California at Berkeley. The Real Value of SNAP benefits and Health Outcomes.

⁸ Berkowitz, S. A. et al. SNAP Participation and Health Care Expenditures Among Low-Income Adults. JAMA Internal Medicine, 2017.



SNAP improves the state's economy. SNAP benefits pumped \$2.2 billion into North Carolina's economy in 2016,⁹ and the economic benefits were especially impactful in the agriculture and retail sectors. Research from Moody's Analytics shows that for every dollar spent on SNAP, \$1.70 is put back into the U.S. economy.¹⁰ Furthermore, SNAP kept 346,000 North Carolinians out of poverty, including 158,000 children, each year between 2010 and 2014.¹¹ SNAP dollars go to supporting grocers, farmers, paying workers, and buying goods, all of which leads to economic growth. In 2012, SNAP redemptions at farmers markets in NC totaled \$107,971, by 2017 that amount had more than tripled to \$328,215. SNAP allows all families to participate in their local economies and makes our communities stronger.

SNAP is effective and efficient. SNAP's entitlement structure allows the program to expand in times of greater need, such as the 2008 recession, and contract in times of economic prosperity. Furthermore, every penny of monthly SNAP benefits for North Carolinians comes from the federal government, and the state of North Carolina is only responsible for half of the administrative costs of the program.¹² The SNAP program therefore brings in billions of dollars of economic activity for North Carolina, with little input at the state level. SNAP also has one of the most rigorous quality control systems of any public benefit program, which results in low frequency of fraud or abuse, and an error rate of just 2%.¹³

To conclude, we support you in rejecting any proposals in the 2018 Farm Bill that cut funding to SNAP or other federal nutrition programs; shift costs to the states; or otherwise reduce benefits affecting low-income families, workers, children, the unemployed, or the elderly.

Thank you for your hard work on this important matter. We greatly appreciate your commitment to protect these programs. On behalf of the Capital Area Food Network, please contact Cindy Sink at cindy@foodshuttle.org if you have any questions or would like more information.

Sincerely,

The Capital Area Food Network
Wake County

⁹ CBPP, North Carolina SNAP fact sheet. 2017.

¹⁰ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, NC Food and Nutrition Services, March 2017

¹¹ Note: Calculations use Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM).

Source: CBPP analysis of Census Bureau's Current Population Survey and SPM public use files. Corrections for underreported government assistance from Health and Human Services/Urban Institute Transfer Income Model (TRIM).

¹² CBPP, Policy Basics: Introduction to SNAP, Oct. 2017.

¹³ USDA, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Payment for Error Rates FY 2014.