

AGRICULTURE AND CONSERVATION (AGR)

Resolution AGR-24-07

PROTECTING AND STRENGTHENING THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) recognizes that Farm Bill programs provide essential support to the food and nutrition security of the nation;

WHEREAS, the Farm Bill's unique focus on eliminating hunger and increasing nutrition security builds a stronger society for all;

WHEREAS, the provisions of the Farm Bill support both urban and rural communities, and provide critical assistance to those facing the devastating effects of hunger and poverty, and that Bill requires a long-term Reauthorization;

WHEREAS, 38 million people in the US are experiencing food insecurity;

WHEREAS, of those facing food, insecurity, 15.2 million are white, 11.1 million are Latino, 9.5 million are Black, and 2.4 million are Native Americans, Asian American, and Pacific Islanders or multiple races;

WHEREAS, while nearly 40% of the food insecure population in the U.S. is white, Black, Native American, and Latino individuals are 2 to over 3 times more likely to live in food insecure households;

WHEREAS, there has been increasing recognition of the ways that structural racism has shaped health inequities and that food insecurity is a public health issue;

WHEREAS, a key part of the Farm Bill, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the largest anti-hunger program in the United States, provides critical food and nutrition assistance to over 42 million low-income Americans;

WHEREAS, eligibility for SNAP is limited to households with a gross income under 130% of the federal poverty guidelines, for a family of 3 is \$2,495 a month, or about \$29,940 a year;

WHEREAS, 79% of SNAP households had at least one person working in the past 12 months, but the average SNAP household had an annual gross income of only \$10,680;

WHEREAS, 14 million children or 1 in 5 US children participate in SNAP, and 66% of all SNAP households contain children;

WHEREAS, in a recent study, among SNAP participating households, Black households had a higher risk of being food insecure than those that were White;

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WHEREAS, SNAP participation itself reduces the risk of food insecurity in low-income populations by 30%; and

WHEREAS, SNAP improves food security by increasing access to nutritious food and is linked to approximately 25% lower healthcare costs.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) calls on Congress to reauthorize the nation's nutrition and agricultural legislation, the Farm Bill as soon as possible;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL supports the passage of a Farm Bill that incorporates the following principles: protect the value of SNAP benefits, maintain, and increase equitable access to SNAP and nutrition education, and streamline SNAP program administration to increase cost efficiencies, but that increase the number of people served without compromising service level while improving access to nutritious, fresh, and local food;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL supports the increase in SNAP benefit levels established by October 2021 by updates to the Thrifty Food Plan to help cover the cost of a nutritious diet;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL strongly supports all efforts to strengthen the integrity and efficiency of the program, including enhanced technology and equitable consumer protections;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL strongly oppose proposals to increase the work requirements and time limits on SNAP recipients, which do little to improve employability or self-sufficiency, and actually increase food insecurity;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL supports maintaining the state option to expand participation through the adoption of Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility to streamline income and resource guidelines with other federal benefit programs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL supports maintaining SNAP-ED as mandatory funding, and expanding food and nutrition education programs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, we support SNAP choice and programs that promote food security, nutrition, and health by maintaining nutrition programs funding opportunities like the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) providing incentives to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables by low-income consumers;

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL support programs that increase equitable access to SNAP in historically underserved communities, including immigrants and others impacted by the suggested rule changes to the Public Charge policy;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL supports full access to SNAP for tribal communities, regardless of participation in other nutrition programs, and the full transition to SNAP for Puerto Rico and other US territories; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, members of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, and other federal and state government officials as appropriate.

Resolution ID: AGR-24-07

Sponsored by: Rep. Toni Rose (TX), Rep. Shevrin Jones (FL), and Sen. Cory McCray (MD)

Policy Committee: Agriculture and Conservation(AGR) Policy Committee