

House Agriculture Committee Advances Unacceptable Farm Bill, Leaving Low-Income Families Behind

Statement of Ty Jones Cox, Vice President for Food Assistance, on the committee-approved bill

Late last night, the House Agriculture Committee voted to advance a deeply flawed farm bill that turns its back on the millions of low-income families struggling to afford groceries in the wake of the harmful Republican megabill enacted last summer, which made the deepest cut to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in history. This bill – or any other farm legislation that fails to address these devastating SNAP cuts – should be rejected.

During consideration of the bill, many committee members emphasized the harm of these unprecedented cuts. Hundreds of thousands of people with low incomes have already lost needed food assistance as these cuts have taken effect, with even deeper cuts yet to come. In total, more than 4 million people, including 1 million children, are expected to see their food assistance cut substantially or eliminated altogether. But the committee-approved bill does nothing to address this unfolding crisis, and Republican Agriculture Committee members rejected numerous amendments to mitigate the harm.

Most concerning, the bill fails to address the megabill's untenable cost shift, which slashes billions of dollars in federal funding for food assistance and imposes these enormous costs on states and localities as an unfunded mandate. This could drive states to make far deeper SNAP cuts or even *withdraw from SNAP entirely*, leaving everyone in a state – including children, seniors, people with disabilities, and veterans – without any food assistance at all.

While congressional Republicans have consistently downplayed these risks, the nation's governors, state legislatures, and other officials are taking this threat seriously. A bipartisan coalition of state and local officials has [called on Congress](#) to apply a limited existing delay of this cost shift to *all* states, citing "significant operational disruption" since the megabill's enactment that will result in substantial "unintended fiscal risks" and jeopardize SNAP for eligible low-income families. Yet the House Agriculture Committee failed to include this urgent request in its farm bill.

Committee members also proposed bipartisan amendments to address other key issues affecting

households who use SNAP, including an amendment to facilitate the transition to more secure EBT cards that would protect low-income families from having their SNAP benefits stolen. These amendments were also rejected. Republicans even rejected an amendment to restore the annual report on food insecurity using a validated measure that has been in place for 30 years, hamstringing the public's access to information about the impact of the megabill's cuts.

Every member of the House Agriculture Committee represents families with low incomes who need SNAP to afford groceries, and it is deeply disappointing to see all Republicans and some Democratic members of the House Agriculture Committee vote to advance a bill that fails to deliver for these constituents.

A farm bill does not support our nation's food security if it ignores the needs of the millions of people across the U.S. who cannot consistently afford to put food on the table. A farm bill does not deliver for rural communities if it leaves behind the roughly 1 in 7 rural households who use SNAP at the grocery store each month. As the legislative process continues, Congress must prioritize the urgent need to address the harm already unfolding across the country from the megabill's devastating SNAP cuts – starting with the looming unfunded mandate that threatens to take away food assistance from millions of low-income families.

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