
Greenstein: Congress Should Use Senate Farm Bill as Basis for Final Bill

CBPP released the following statement from Robert Greenstein, president, on Senate passage of its 2018 farm bill:

The Senate's farm bill, which it approved in bipartisan fashion, would strengthen SNAP, ensuring that millions of Americans can continue to feed their families each day. The bill contrasts sharply with the partisan House version, which would move America backward by taking food assistance away from substantial numbers of people in need and making SNAP less effective at reducing food insecurity and supporting low-income families. When House and Senate members negotiate a final farm bill, they should hew to the Senate approach — working across party lines to produce a bill that improves rather than weakens America's most effective anti-hunger program.

While reauthorizing SNAP (formerly known as food stamps), the Senate bill would provide for modest improvements to program integrity, operations, and administration. It also would expand the 2014 farm bill's pilot program to test new approaches to job training and other employment-related activities for SNAP participants, which is designed to determine what works best in this area.

The Senate bill is far superior to the House version, which would eliminate or reduce food assistance for more than 1 million low-income households with more than 2 million people. Those likely to lose food assistance under the House bill include many working families, as well as many caregivers. Children, too, would be harmed because when parents lose SNAP, they have fewer resources to feed their families.

The Senate bill's nutrition provisions reflect Congress' longstanding tradition of seeking to make bipartisan reforms and improvements to SNAP. Policymakers should use the bill's SNAP measures as the basis for the final bill and should discard the House's partisan provisions, which would increase hunger and hardship and further widen the nation's economic divide.

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