

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 30, 2025

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Madam Secretary,

We write to express deep concern regarding the potential lapse in federal nutrition assistance programs amid the government shutdown and urge the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to utilize all available contingency funding and statutory transfer authority to sustain the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits through November.

SNAP and WIC are among the most effective evidence-based programs our nation has to combat hunger and promote nutrition. They ensure low-income families, children, and older adults can access nutritious foods essential for their well-being. These programs not only reduce hunger but also yield measurable benefits for maternal and child health, improve birth outcomes, and lower long-term healthcare costs.

Families are already struggling to make ends meet as grocery prices continue to rise. The Consumer Price Index (CPI)¹ shows that food-at-home prices remain significantly higher than pre-pandemic levels, rising faster than overall inflation and squeezing household budgets even further. Millions of Americans—especially those living paycheck to paycheck—cannot absorb a disruption to these critical programs.

In North Carolina alone, over 1.4 million residents rely on SNAP to help put food on the table each month. This includes more than 600,000 children, 159,000 older adults, and 46,000 veterans—individuals who have served our country and now depend on these benefits for basic sustenance.

WIC, likewise, provides essential support for mothers, infants, and children, ensuring access to nutritious foods and health services that foster strong starts in life. In North Carolina, 49%, nearly half, of infants born in the state participate in WIC, and 237,656 women, infants, and children rely on the program each month. Due to recent shutdown funding constraints, North Carolina has already been forced to limit lactation services—an alarming signal of what could happen if federal funding lapses entirely.

SNAP and WIC do more than help families put food on the table—they are vital to the health of North Carolina's food economy. Retailers across the state rely on a portion of their sales from SNAP purchases, with even greater economic impact in rural communities where local grocery

¹ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Consumer Price Index Summary, September 2025*.
https://www.bls.gov/news.release/cpi.nr0.htm#cpi_pressa.f.1

stores serve as the economic heartbeat.² In fiscal year 2024 alone, nearly \$3 billion³ in SNAP benefits and \$165.5 million^{4,5} in WIC benefits were redeemed at North Carolina retailers—an economic lifeline that sustains businesses and strengthens local economies.

These programs also support North Carolina farmers. Many of the state farmers' markets accept SNAP and WIC benefits, enabling families to purchase fresh, locally grown produce directly from the producers. When these programs lapse or funding is delayed, the effects ripple through our rural communities: families lose access to nutritious food, and farmers lose a dependable source of income. For small farms that already operate on thin margins, even a short disruption can mean the difference between staying in business or not. Keeping SNAP and WIC strong ensures that North Carolina's agricultural economy remains resilient while making sure every family can afford fresh, local food.

Given the urgency of the situation, we strongly urge the USDA to deploy all available contingency and reserve funds to continue SNAP and WIC operations in November and utilize statutory transfer authority to prevent any disruption in benefits during a government shutdown.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Alma S. Adams, PhD
Member of Congress



Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress



Valerie P. Foushee
Member of Congress



Donald G. Davis
Member of Congress

² NC Budget and Tax Center. *Mapping What's at Stake: The Impact of SNAP on North Carolina's Families and Local Economies*. <https://ncbudget.org/mapping-whats-at-stake-the-impact-of-snap-on-north-carolinas-families-and-local-economies/>.

³ SNAP Monthly State Participation and Benefit Summary P-EBT/Other Excluded - Public Data, Fiscal Year 2024.

⁴ Food and Nutrition Service. *WIC Data Tables*. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/wic-program>

⁵ National WIC Association. *How WIC Helps North Carolina*.

<https://thewichub.sfo2.digitaloceanspaces.com/2025/02/20144951/North-Carolina.pdf>