

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

July 1, 2025

Dear Speaker Johnson and Minority Leader Jeffries:

We write to express serious concerns regarding the provisions in HR 1 related to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the potential impact on state participation in this critical program. We respectfully urge the House Leadership to reject this unprecedented and deeply harmful policy, which jeopardizes access to food assistance for millions of eligible low-income households. At minimum, we request careful consideration of the significant implementation challenges of the SNAP provisions before moving forward with final passage of HR 1.

Based on the language of the underlying Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (FNA) combined with the proposed changes in HR 1, some states may be unable to meet the newly introduced state cost-sharing requirements. **This raises the alarming possibility that certain states may be forced to withdraw from SNAP entirely.**

To provide context, HR 1 introduces the first-ever cost shift to states for SNAP's nutrition benefits in the program's 50-year history. While states (and in some cases, county and tribal governments) currently pay for half the share of the administrative costs of SNAP, the federal government has historically covered 100 percent of the nutrition benefit costs. The new legislation would require most states to contribute a portion of these benefit costs—a significant departure from the current funding structure. However, the implementation of this new cost share and how it interacts with existing law lacks clarity and presents considerable challenges.

The key concern stems from the interplay between HR 1's cost-sharing mandate and the FNA's existing requirement that states issue SNAP benefits at a specific amount. Under current law, states must provide the **full** benefit amount to eligible households, which has always been fully federally funded. Under HR 1, states must cover a share of this benefit, but the federal government is prohibited from paying more than its designated federal share. Further, HR 1 indicates that "The [USDA] Secretary...may not apply Section 13(a)(1) of the Food and Nutrition Act to the payment or disposition of a State share" – this suggests that the USDA Secretary cannot compromise or modify the state share, which leaves no flexibility if a state cannot meet its full cost share. This creates a legal and practical impasse for states.

For example, if an individual is entitled to a \$100 SNAP benefit and the state cost share is 15 percent (\$15) and the federal share is 85 percent (\$85), the state faces the following dilemmas:

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- States cannot issue the full \$100 benefit without contributing the \$15 state share, because HR 1 prevents the federal government from covering more than its portion.
- States cannot issue a reduced benefit (e.g., \$80 or \$75) with partial federal and state funding because the FNA mandates the full benefit amount to be issued.
- If the state cannot appropriate the required funds, its only options may be to drastically reduce program enrollment—effectively denying benefits to many eligible individuals—or to withdraw from SNAP entirely, leaving households without any assistance.

This is not a hypothetical risk. Since annual SNAP benefit issuance for states can reach billions of dollars, a 15 percent state contribution would mean hundreds of millions of dollars in new expenses. Given constitutional and budgetary constraints on states being forced to leave the program altogether, securing such a substantial funding increase from state legislatures will pose a significant challenge. Additionally, the proposed cost-shift is highly volatile; a relatively small increase in a state's SNAP error rate could require the state to pay tens or hundreds of millions of dollars more than in the prior year, making it difficult for states to plan and budget for these costs long-term. Consequently, states would face the untenable choice of either severe enrollment cuts or ending their state SNAP program altogether.

Moreover, HR 1 expressly prohibits the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) from providing states with exceptions from the cost-share requirement and does not provide any flexibility in benefit issuance under these new constraints. This lack of regulatory flexibility could leave states without viable options to manage funding shortfalls while maintaining compliance with federal law. Without USDA's ability to grant waivers or adjust requirements, states may be forced to untenable positions, risking service disruptions or program withdrawal.

The [Congressional Budget Office \(CBO\)](#) has echoed these concerns, noting that some states might maintain current benefits, while others could modify benefits or eligibility or even leave the program altogether due to the increased costs.

Given SNAP's vital role in food security for millions of Americans, we urge a careful reevaluation of the cost shift provisions and the lack of clarity surrounding state participation and flexibility. It is imperative that the legislation ensures states can continue to serve all eligible low-income households even if they are not able to meet the full cost share, without being forced to leave the program altogether.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. Again, we respectfully urge the House Leadership to carefully consider significant implementation challenges of the SNAP provisions before moving forward with final passage of HR 1. Ensuring clarity and flexibility in the legislation before passage is essential to avoid jeopardizing state participation and the food security of millions of Americans.

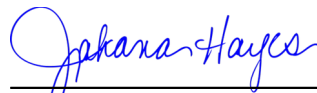
Sincerely,

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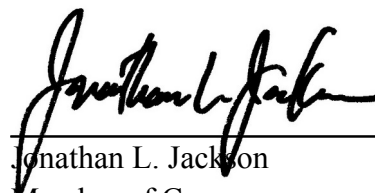
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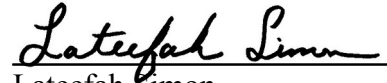
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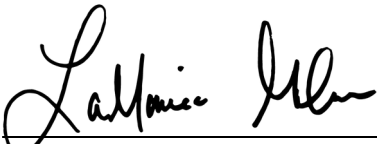
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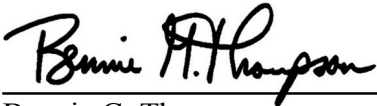
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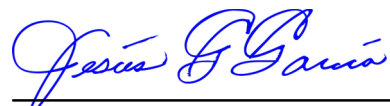
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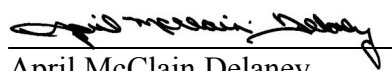
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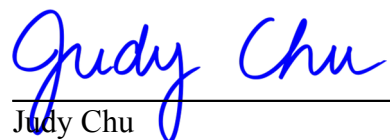
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CC:
The Honorable Glenn "G.T." Thompson
The Honorable Angie Craig