COALITION FOR FOOD SECURITY  PUERTO RICO

**Joint Statement by the Coalition for Food Security Puerto Rico, National Organizations and Stakeholder Groups in Support of Transitioning Puerto Rico to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**

Puerto Rico is home to U.S. citizens who deserve participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The 2023 Farm Bill provides the opportunity to transition Puerto Rico into SNAP and finally afford people residing in the territory parity to nutrition benefits offered in the states, Guam and USVI.

SNAP is the most critical anti-hunger program supporting nutrition, health, and economic well-being. Yet, people living in Puerto Rico were excluded from the program in 1981 and locked into a capped federal block grant known as the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP). Over the past forty years, Puerto Rico's exclusion from the program has exacerbated poverty and food insecurity for low-income families, children, the elderly, and veterans. When implemented in 1982, the transition resulted in an automatic 25% reduction in aid.

Currently, the maximum monthly benefit for people receiving NAP in Puerto Rico averages **41 percent** less than SNAP in the 48 states and D.C. With inflation, food supply chain challenges, and increasing poverty, families are facing even greater hardships.

The block grant severely limits Puerto Rico's ability to respond to necessary changes. NAP has no equivalent to Disaster-SNAP, so disasters or emergencies require new and separate appropriations by Congress, which can take months. Following Hurricane Maria in September 2017, people in Puerto Rico waited six months to receive additional nutrition aid.

Since NAP is not need-based like SNAP, U.S. citizens living in Puerto Rico receive uneven benefits as enrollment levels go up or down. Given reduced funding, NAP has stricter eligibility requirements, so people have lower income levels than those in the states. People receiving NAP make hard decisions about food, nutrition, health, and housing every day. SNAP provides essential support to workers in low-income jobs as they seek employment and financial security for their families.

Nearly one in three NAP households in Puerto Rico is a person aged 60 or older, and 56% of all households are people living alone. Families with children, older adults, children, the working poor, and persons with disabilities represent 80% of all NAP households.

The nutrition aid provided to Puerto Rico helps the U.S. economy with 75% of imported food purchased from the U.S. Puerto Rico's purchases greatly support U.S. manufacturing, distribution, farming, and transportation. Puerto Rico's executive and legislative branches of government are already committed and preparing for a SNAP transition.

The 2023 Farm Bill presents Congress with the opportunity to include Puerto Rico in SNAP through a systemic transition that provides equitable nutrition benefits to its residents. We ask you to support Puerto Rico’s participation in SNAP.

April 27, 2023

Able Sales

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Acción Comunitaria del Vivi, Inc.

ACOMERPR

ACDET – Puerto Rico Retailers Association

AgriLove

AJC International, Inc.

Alabama State Association of Cooperatives

Alianza Americas

Alliance to End Hunger

American Butchers, Inc.

American Federation of Government Employees – Local 3354

American Federation of Teachers (AFT)

American GI Forum

American Heart Association

American Indian Mothers, Inc.

American Sustainable Business Network

Ardent Mills

ARTE Inc.

Asociación Hecho en Puerto Rico, Inc.

Asociacion Mayaguezana de Personas con Impedimentos, Inc.

ASPIRA Association, Inc.

Asociación de Servicios Sociales Pentecostales – Puerto Rico

Avanzada (PROACE)

AVANCE

B. Fernandez & Hnos., Inc.

Ballester Hermanos, Inc.

Banco de Alimentos de Puerto Rico

Bill’s Kitchen, Inc.

Bipartisan Policy Center Food & Nutrition Security Task Force

Bread for the World

Can Manufacturers Institute

Caribbean Can Manufacturing

Caribbean Logistics Solutions, LLC

Caribbean Produce

Caritas de Puerto Rico

Casa de Esperanza

Casa Otonal, Inc.

Casita Maria

Center for A New Economy    
Center for Disability Rights, Inc.

Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

Centro Sor Isolina Ferre  
Century Parking Corp./Carmela Foods

Club de Leones de Catano

Coca-Cola Puerto Rico Bottlers

Compañeros Campesinas

Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI)

Congressional Hunger Center

Conuco Campesino

Corporación COPASE

Crowley Maritime Corp.

Cuban American National Council

Cupey Renace

Dando El PAN Necesitado

Dominicanos USA

Dominico-American Society of Queens

Dynamic CDC

Eagle Logistics Systems

Farinaceos del Este

Farm Aid

Farm to Table – New Mexico

Farmworker Association of Florida

Farmworker Justice

Feeding America

Ferraiuoli LLC

Fifth Avenue Committee

Food Research & Action Center (FRAC)

Fresh House LLC

Fundacion Suenos Inolvidables

Fundacion de Desarrollo Comunal de P.R., Inc.

Fundacion Yo Puedo Inc.

GIG Logistics, LLC

GreenLatinos

Grupo Amor

GrupoFerrer

GrupoNavis

GMT LLC

Harvard Law School Food Law and Policy Clinic

Hermanos Sin Fronteras, Inc.

Hispanic Alliance of Southeastern Connecticut

Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities (HACU)

Hispanic Federation (HF)

Hispanics In Philanthropy (HIP)

Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA)

Hogar Niños Forjadores de Esperanza

Holsum de Puerto Rico

House of Representatives of Puerto Rico

Hunger Free America

I Challenge Myself

Ibero American Action League

ID Shaliah, Inc.

Iglesia Cristiana Rio del Jordan

Iglesia de Dios Oasis de Bendicion

Iglesia de Dios Buenas Nuevas

Iglesia de Dios Eclesiates, Inc.

Iglesia de Dios Morada de Justicia, Inc.

Iglesia Evangélica Centro Cristiano Shalom

Iglesia Metodista de Puerto Rico

Iglesia Metodista San Pablo

Iglesia Pentecostal Vida por Vidas

Iglesia Presbiteriana USA

Industria Lechera de Puerto Rico, Inc.

Instituto del Desarrollo de la Juventud

Interra Foods

International Public Terminal LLC

International Shipping Agency, Inc.

Inter-University Program for Latino Research (IUPLR)

Jesus’ Angels

Kikuet Foods

Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA)

Latino Commission on AIDS

LatinoJustice PRLDEF

Latino Leadership

League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)

Lions Club International Puerto Rico

LiveWell Greenville

Make the Road New York

MANA, A National Latina Organization

Marine and Terminal Services, Inc.

Marine Asset Management, Inc.

Marvel International, Inc.

MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger

Menaco Corporation

Méndez & Co., Inc.

Mexican American Legal Defense & Educational Fund (MALDEF)

MIDA – Food Merchandising and Distribution Association

Mi Familia Vota

Ministerio Rescatadores sin Banderas

Miranda Family Fund

Mujeres Ayudando Madres, Inc. (MAM, Inc.)

Mujeres de Islas

NALEO Educational Fund

National Association of Hispanic Educators (NAHE)

National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators

National Hispanic Council on Aging

National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts (NHFA)

National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMA)

National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA)

National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice

National Latinx Psychological Association (NLPA)

National Puerto Rican Chamber of Commerce

North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers Land Loss Prevention Project

Oceanic General Agency, Inc.

One Wellness Group

Orden de Santiago Apostol

Organización Solidaridad Humanitaria

Oscar Cash and Carry

Paletados Levittown

Pan Pepin, Inc.

Pesticide Action Network

PFLAG National

Pilgrims/To Ricos Ltd.

Presente.org

Profamilias

Programa de Ayuda a Personas de Edad

Programa de Educación Comunal de Entrega y Servicio (PECES, Inc.)

Pueblo, Inc.

Puerto Rican Association for Human Development, Inc. (PRAHD)

Puerto Rico Coffee Roasters

Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration

Puerto Rico Food Safety & Quality Services

Puerto Rico Manufacturers Association

Puerto Rico Shipping Association

Pure Fresh Sales, Inc.

Quesos Vaca Negra Inc.   
Quirch Corporation

Red por los Derechos de la Niñez y Juventud de Puerto Rico, Inc.

Repertorial Espanol

Rossland Agricultural Supplies, Ltd.

Ruiz Law Offices

Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA (RAFI-USA)

Rural Advancement Fund of the National Sharecroppers Fund

Rural Coalition

Rural Development Leadership Network

Sea Air Systems, Inc.

San Juan Center, Inc.

Selectos, Inc.

Senate of Puerto Rico

SER – Jobs for Progress National, Inc.

Share Our Strength

SNAC International

Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project (SVREP)

Spanish Speaking Elderly Council - RAICES

Supermercados Econo, Inc.

Supermercados Máximo, Inc.

Teatro Circulo

Tenedor Social

Tierra Valiente CRL con Fin Social

UnidosUS

Union of Concerned Scientists

United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

United States Hispanic Leadership Institute (USHLI)

United States-Mexico Chamber of Commerce

United Way Puerto Rico

United We Stand For Puerto Rico, Inc

Urban Health Plan, Inc.

U.S. – Mexico Foundation

V. Suárez & Co., Inc.

Violence Intervention Program

VIP Community Services

Teatro Aragua Inc.

Tenedor Social

Tres Monjitas

ToteMaritime

Voto Latino

Walmart Puerto Rico

World Farmers

Zone 126