



June 10, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair, U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair, House Committee on Appropriations
2207 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair, U.S. Senate Committee on
Appropriations
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member, House Committee on
Appropriations
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Murray, Vice Chair Collins, Chair Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro,

On behalf of Alliance to End Hunger, I am writing to urge you to fully invest in federal nutrition programs in the Fiscal Year 2025 budget. U.S. domestic food assistance programs are a critical component of fighting hunger in the United States and supporting our nation's most vulnerable community members.

According to a 2023 report on food security by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), approximately 44.2 million [households](#) were food insecure in the United States in 2022. The recent Feeding America [Map the Meal Gap](#) report found that 100% of counties and congressional districts have community members that face food insecurity. Of these, certain groups are affected more than others including children, individuals in rural areas, and people of color. Food insecurity among Black and Latino individuals is higher than their white counterparts in more than 9 out of every 10 counties. Additionally, in 2022, 9.1 percent of U.S. households with adults aged 65 and older experienced food insecurity at some time during the year.

Our Alliance is requesting the following funding amounts for USDA in the upcoming Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill (except where noted):

Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

WIC provides a monthly benefit for healthy foods, which has been shown to produce long-term health benefits for participants. Last fiscal year, WIC experienced unprecedented pressures as participation and food costs outpaced initial projections. For FY25, USDA estimates that as many as seven million participants will be certified for WIC services, matching the recent trend of growing participation. We urge Congress to provide \$7.75 billion in WIC budget authority for FY25.

Additionally, we encourage Congress to maintain a commitment to the scientific integrity of WIC food packages. Recently, USDA finalized a rule providing first-in-a-decade modifications to align with current nutrition science and support equitable access to nutritious foods, including making the expansion of WIC's fruit and vegetable benefit permanent. Therefore, we oppose legislative efforts – including riders in the appropriations process – that would undermine the independent, science-based updates to the WIC food packages.

Additionally, Congress should revitalize the Management Information System (MIS) set-aside authorized under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act. Updates to WIC's complex computer systems are essential for modernizing services, implementing the revised food packages, integrating with healthcare databases, and



scaling up online and mobile payments. We ask Congress to support a \$50 million set-aside for Management Information Systems.

WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)

FMNP supports low-income mothers seeking to buy fruits and vegetables from local farmers. We urge Congress to invest \$30 million for FMNP, so that eligible WIC participants are equipped with benefits to purchase fresh, locally grown produce directly from farmers, farmers' markets, and roadside stands. In FY22, 14,582 farmers, 2,623 farmers' markets and 2,392 roadside stands participated in the program.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

TEFAP is a federal nutrition program that moves nutritious food from farms to food banks to individuals and families facing hunger. Amid the highest food insecurity rates in nearly a decade, food banks are struggling to keep pace with demand. One in three people facing hunger are unlikely to be eligible for SNAP due to their state income thresholds and asset tests. These individuals are more likely to turn to their local food bank to fill the food gaps.

Allocations for storage and distribution help food banks offset the cost of storing and transporting USDA foods, especially in rural communities. This includes covering the expenses for refrigeration and fuel. We urge Congress to fully authorize \$100 million for the TEFAP storage and distribution account. During the last several years, Congress has appropriated these critical funds at less than the fully-authorized level of \$100 million annually, leaving food banks to cover the difference.

Additionally, we recommend \$15 million to fully fund the TEFAP Rural Infrastructure Grants Program to help offset capital, infrastructure, and operating costs of rural and under-resourced food banks. This funding would help address significant cold storage and transportation capacity shortages that are affecting the ability of food banks and other food distribution organizations to store and distribute USDA foods.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

CSFP supplements the diets of low-income persons at least 60 years of age with nutritious USDA commodity foods that are distributed by local food banks or local sponsors. We urge Congress to fund CSFP at \$425 million to improve the diets of low-income elderly individuals. This will ensure that CSFP is able to serve the full caseload. In addition to funding, we request a report language change that will assess barriers to participation and modernize the program by expanding use of home delivery of CSFP food packages. This will ensure that low-income seniors with mobility and transportation challenges can equally benefit from supplemental food boxes. The requested change is the following:

- *Directing USDA to reiterate in guidance that CSFP administrative funds can be used to support home delivery programs; and,*
- *Directing USDA to evaluate and submit a report to Congress on the barriers to CSFP participation and state strategies utilized to improve participation.*

Summer EBT Program

It is projected that 21.5 million children in low-income families will participate in permanent Summer EBT starting Summer 2025, which will significantly decrease child food insecurity in the summer months. We urge Congress to invest \$126 million in FY25 to waive the state administration match and \$50 million in state implementation grants. This will support bolstering State and Indian Tribal Organization implementation of Summer EBT.



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

To maintain the reach and effectiveness of SNAP, please add report language to protect against potential appropriations shortfalls, such as “provide such sums as are necessary to ensure continuity of SNAP operations and benefits.”

We also urge Congress to add report language to make the SNAP Online Pilot permanent. The SNAP Online Pilot was first created through the 2014 Farm Bill and modified and clarified in the 2018 Farm Bill. It was critical in meeting the needs of Americans experiencing hunger during the COVID-19 pandemic and became an essential tool for families and seniors when states across the country enrolled in the pilot. After the successful expansion of the program over the last five years, there is no reason for USDA to operate it under a temporary status, which creates uncertainty for retailers and recipients. The requested change is as follows:

- *Urges USDA to use its authority to make the SNAP Online Pilot program permanent.*

Finally, we request Appropriators reject bill or report language that would change SNAP eligibility or benefits such as restricting SNAP choice for program participants.

Older Americans Act (OAA)/Meals on Wheels (MOW)

OAA supports nutrition services for older individuals throughout the country and significantly reduces hunger and nutrition insecurity, promotes social interaction, advances health and well-being, and impedes adverse health conditions. We urge Congress to provide \$1.842 billion for the OAA Nutrition Program to be included in the final FY25 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS-Ed) Appropriations bill. This will address increased demand for meals and operational costs. Increasing authorized funding for all OAA programs and establishing incentives and funding for enhanced nutrition services will increase MOW’s ability to continue to deliver medically tailored and culturally appropriate meals. The specific line-item requests are:

- Congregate Nutrition Services (Title III-C-1) – \$840,842,000
- Home-Delivered Nutrition Services (Title III-C-2) – \$840,842,000
- Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP) (Title III) – \$160,069,000

Our coalition commends Congress for taking steps to maintain a strong nutrition safety net. In this time of great need, it is vital to continue to invest in these proven and effective programs to reduce food insecurity and improve nutrition for our most vulnerable residents.

Respectfully,

Eric P. Mitchell
President
Alliance to End Hunger

CC: Chairman Harris, Ranking Member Bishop, Chairman Heinrich, Ranking Member Hoeven



Alliance to End Hunger unites diverse sectors to address today's hunger and malnutrition needs and to solve the root causes of hunger at home and abroad.

Alliance to End Hunger Organizational Members

Corporate

Amazon
American Peanut Council
Cantera Partners
Cargill, Inc.
Corteva Agriscience
DoorDash
GrainPro
Grubhub
Instacart
Shipt
United Health Care
Walmart

Non-Profit

1,000 Days
AARP
ACOMER Puerto Rico
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Relief Agency for the Horn of Africa (ARAHA)
CEO Action for Racial Equity
The Clean Slate Initiative
Congressional Hunger Center
Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA)
Edesia
End Hunger USA 2030
Fair Food Network
The Farmlink Project
Feeding America
Food Enterprise Solutions
FoodFinder
Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF)
The Global FoodBanking Network
Global Volunteers
Growing Hope Globally
The Hunger Project
InterAction
International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA)
March of Dimes
Meals on Wheels America
MEANS Database
Meds & Food for Kids

Move for Hunger
Mercy Without Limits
National Council on Aging (NCOA)
National Farmers Union
National WIC Association
One Acre Fund
Opportunity International
The Outreach Program
Penny Appeal USA
Poetry X Hunger
RESULTS
Rise Against Hunger
The Root Cause Coalition
Save the Children
Share Our Strength - No Kid Hungry
Souper Bowl of Caring
World Food Program USA

Faith-Based

Bread for the World
Christian Connections for International Health
Church World Service (CWS)
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)
Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America (IFANCA)
Islamic Relief USA
Lutheran World Relief
MAZON - A Jewish Response to Hunger
Partners Worldwide
Society of St. Andrew
World Renew

University

Auburn University
Maxwell | Syracuse University

Foundation

AARP Foundation
Eleanor Crook Foundation
Farm Journal Foundation
SODEXO Stop Hunger Foundation

**Alliance to End Hunger policy priorities are developed through consultation with the Alliance's Advocacy Committee. This letter is signed by the Alliance to End Hunger as an organization and does not necessarily reflect official views of the Alliance's individual members.*