

November 26, 2024

Dear President-Elect Trump:

We write today as a broad alliance of organizations, representing the agriculture, food, retail, anti-hunger and labor sectors, in support of maintaining individual freedoms in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), to ensure that families can buy the groceries they determine are best suited for them -- without federal government interference in those personal decisions.

SNAP is a critical lifeline for working families and individuals, providing food access to families during times of temporary hardship. A key strength of the program is its flexibility, allowing participants to select from a wide range of foods based on their dietary needs, personal preferences and cultural values. This ability to make personal choices is essential to helping families manage their health and maintain their dignity, without the federal government dictating how Americans feed themselves and their loved ones. Food insecurity is also typically compounded by a lack of access to fresh foods, dietary options, and affordable grocery choices. SNAP helps provide resources for those options.

Past proposals have aimed to restrict SNAP purchases, including when Maine requested a waiver to limit the purchase of specific foods during your first term. Your Administration wisely denied this waiver, recognizing the significant administrative costs and regulatory burdens it would impose on small businesses and retailers with no cost savings. Restricting SNAP choices would require a complex, costly bureaucracy and the creation and maintenance of a government mandated approved foods list, with limited evidence to suggest such actions would yield meaningful health benefits.

We are concerned that, regardless of today's proposals, any movement toward SNAP restrictions risks a slippery slope, of an ever-expanding list of prohibited items based on the whim of bureaucrats and politicians. Such restrictions would broaden government control and allow Washington policymakers to dictate food choices in hard-working Americans' grocery carts. This approach would only increase federal oversight, undermining the freedom SNAP families deserve to make their own food choices.

We strongly urge you to uphold the current level of choice that SNAP participants have by rejecting restrictions or pilot programs of restrictions that would impact not only retailers, their employees, and food manufacturers, but also the Americans who rely on SNAP. These individuals deserve the same dignity as consumers who do not rely on SNAP to choose the foods best suited to their needs.

Sincerely,

Alliance to End Hunger

American Beverage Association

American Frozen Foods Institute

Can Manufacturers Institute

Congressional Hunger Center

Consumer Brands Association

Equitable Spaces

Feeding America

FMI - The Food Industry Association

Food Research & Action Center

Grubhub

Independent Bakers Association

International Dairy Foods Association

National Association of Convenience Stores

National Confectioners Association

National Grocers Association

National Retail Federation

North American Millers' Association

Refrigerated Foods Association

Share Our Strength

SNAC International