



November 19, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee  
154 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

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

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

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

Dear Chairwoman Murray, Chairman Cole, Vice Chair Collins, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I write today on behalf of the Alliance to End Hunger, a coalition of over 100 nonprofit organizations, corporations, faith-based institutions, universities and others to address today's hunger and malnutrition needs and to solve the root causes of hunger at home and abroad.

I respectfully urge you to fully fund and invest in federal nutrition programs in the Fiscal Year 2025 budget, continuing resolutions, and potential disaster packages and/or the Farm Bill in year-end legislation. 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.

I urge Congress to also swiftly extend the current Farm Bill to avoid disruptions to critical programs that are at risk with the current bill's lapse.

In addition to regular appropriations, it is essential that funding be made available to allow federal nutrition programs to respond to the need for food and water for the millions of people affected by Hurricanes Helene and Milton and for other natural disasters that impact access to food. This funding is critical given the destruction of homes, businesses, vehicles, roads and bridges; damage to power, water and waste infrastructure; and disruptions in the lives of people and their ability to get to places to obtain food, to work, to school, and more. Food banks and other hunger relief organizations have been stretched to their limits. Additional funding is crucial to assist in the disaster response.

As Congress and the Administration consider funding, we urge you to include these requests for the following federal nutrition programs, including:

- **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 request that appropriators reject bill or report language that would change SNAP eligibility or benefits such as restricting SNAP choice for program participants.

To ensure that SNAP benefits stolen from participants’ EBT cards through technological fraud, we ask to extend the 2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act provision to ensure that harmed households retain access to food assistance. States must issue replacement SNAP benefits stolen from households due to card skimming, card cloning, and other similar fraudulent methods, up to twice a year per household, replacing the lesser of the full amount stolen or the previous two months of 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.”

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

WIC provides nutrition education, breastfeeding support, healthcare referrals, and a monthly benefit for healthy foods, which have 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 continue fulfilling its promise of “full funding” for WIC, ensuring that every eligible individual who seeks WIC services in FY25 can receive them.

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.

We also urge Congress to provide \$30 million in emergency funding for WIC to support state agencies recovering from Hurricanes Helene and Milton, ensuring WIC participants in impacted states can continue to receive service and benefits without disruption or delay. Amidst the challenges arising from these disasters, state and local WIC agencies have continued to serve families and certify new participants, due in large part to waiver flexibilities allowing participants to be certified by phone or video appointment. We strongly urge Congress to make these flexibilities permanent in any year-end legislative package to ensure all future WIC participants can benefit from a more modern service delivery, better meeting the needs of busy families.

- **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.

To ensure that programs can respond to disasters:

Provide an additional \$245 million in supplemental TEFAP foods to meet both the immediate and long-term needs in areas impacted by natural disasters. This funding will help ensure that local emergency feeding organizations can continue to distribute both emergency and nonemergency food without disruption.

- **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.

To ensure that programs can respond to disasters:

Provide \$29.5 million in additional administrative funding for CSFP in disaster supplemental legislation to ensure food banks have the resources to get food to communities and programs impacted by the CSFP and FDPIR supply chain disruptions.

- **Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)**

FDPIR provides USDA Foods to income-eligible households living on Indian reservations, and to American Indian households residing in approved areas near reservations and in Oklahoma. Provide additional funding in disaster supplemental legislation to ensure FDPIR operators are reimbursed for self-help activities and self-allocated funds expended by tribes to address the supply chain disruption.

- **Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition Programs**

The OAA Nutrition Program (Meals on Wheels and community senior nutrition programs) 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 the OAA Nutrition Program will help Meals on Wheels programs to reach all vulnerable older adults in need and expand their ability 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

- **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

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to continuing to work with Congress and the Administration to ensure this critically needed funding is included in year-end legislative packages.

Sincerely,



Eric P. Mitchell  
President  
Alliance to End Hunger

CC: Hon. Majority Leader Schumer, Hon. Minority Leader McConnell, Hon. Speaker Johnson, Hon. Minority Leader Jeffries, Hon. Agriculture Appropriations Chair Heinrich, Hon. Agriculture Appropriations Ranking Member Hoeven, Hon. Agriculture Appropriations Chair Harris, Hon. Agriculture Appropriations Ranking Member Bishop