



The Honorable Pat Roberts
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition and Forestry
United States Senate – Kansas
Hart SOB Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Conaway
Chairman
House Committee on Agriculture
United States House of Representatives –
Texas – 11th
RHOB, Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition and Forestry
United States Senate – Michigan
Hart SOB, Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Ranking Member
House Committee on Agriculture
United States House of Representatives –
Minnesota – 7th
RHOB, Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Stabenow, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Peterson:

Last week, House and Senate conference committee members convened to begin deliberations on the final provisions contained in the 2018 Farm Bill. In an August [letter](#) addressed to House and Senate Committee leadership, California's anti-hunger community urged all conference committee members to protect and strengthen the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and oppose any provisions that cut or reduce aid to the 40 million Americans, including the 4 million Californians, who use SNAP to put food on the table and make ends meet.

Over the last year, California's anti-hunger community has consistently advocated for a strong, unified Farm Bill that addresses hunger for our nation's low-income communities, reauthorizes vital food and farming programs, and strengthens essential anti-hunger programs like SNAP. We believe that the final conference report should reflect the Senate's approach to strengthen and invest in SNAP and reject the House bill (H.R.2) which would worsen hunger and hardship [by taking food benefits from 2 million Americans](#), including working families, children, seniors and other vulnerable populations. [USDA's own commissioned research](#) shows that an estimated 8 percent of the caseload will lose SNAP benefits, and 265,000 children are estimated to lose school meals with the elimination of Broad Based Categorical Eligibility.

SNAP is our nation's most important anti-hunger program and California's first line of defense against hunger. With millions of Americans still struggling with hunger, new data released by

the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) underscore the critical importance of strong nutrition programs to address hunger for low-income Americans. Nationwide, despite overall declines in food insecurity, [over 40 million Americans struggled with food insecurity at some time during 2017, including 11.2% of Californians](#) and [two of America's hungriest cities—Bakersfield \(1\) and Fresno \(3\)— are located in California's Central Valley that feeds the world.](#)

Hunger and poverty touch every corner of California with [SNAP recipients living in small towns, cities and rural areas throughout the state.](#) SNAP provides a modest benefit to help struggling families put food on the table, yet because SNAP benefits are inadequate to last the entire month, [nearly one-third of all households receiving SNAP still rely on food banks to make ends meet.](#)

SNAP also supports our state's economy, while providing essential nutrition assistance to our neighbors in need. SNAP drives over [\\$11 billion in total economic activity annually](#) and every billion in SNAP supports approximately 14,000 jobs, particularly in our state's food and farming sectors, while SNAP's program structure allows it to respond to changing economic conditions and during times of disaster.

It is our hope that the Conference Committee's final report will follow the Senate's bi-partisan approach and reject the \$20 billion in SNAP cuts included in the [House Farm Bill](#) (H.R.2) which would worsen hunger and hardship for 2 million Americans, including thousands of low-income Californians, and craft a final Farm Bill that protects our state's most vulnerable communities from hunger, while reauthorizing critical food, farming and nutrition programs.

We are grateful for your service and your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

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