2020 Federal Priorities to
Fight Hunger in California

In our nation of wealth, no one should go hungry. We call on the California Congressional Delegation to take decisive action to end hunger and advocate for policies that address the systemic poverty facing our state.

Protect SNAP's Irreplaceable Value from Regulatory Attacks

» SNAP helps prevent hunger for 4 million Californians – that's one in 10.[1]

» Last year, SNAP brought $5.2 billion in food benefits, $8.6 billion in economic activity, and 70,592 jobs statewide.[2]

» The Administration's cuts defy Congress and the historic 2018 bipartisan Farm Bill that protected SNAP:

   › **New Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents Rule:**
   The final rule, which is effective April 1, 2020, undermines the state's ability to waive the time limit in areas with insufficient jobs, cutting food aid for as many as 400,000 Californians on SNAP this year alone.

   › **Proposed Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility Rule:**
   Under the proposed rule, 250,000 to 345,800 Californians will lose SNAP by requiring asset tests and reducing the gross income threshold. At least 170,000 low-income California children will lose automatic free school meals, leaving children hungry while triggering school funding cuts.

   › **Proposed Standard Utility Allowance Rule:**
   The proposed rule would cut benefits for 1 million California SNAP recipients, disproportionately seniors and people with disabilities, by establishing arbitrary new method for setting the utility deduction.

   › **New Public Charge Rule:**
   The rule, which includes SNAP, is in effect as of February 24, 2020. Still challenged in court, it threatens long-term hunger and hardship for immigrant families afraid to access SNAP and other benefits.

Strengthen SNAP Through Proactive Legislation

» **H.R. 2809** *Lee* **– Improving Access to Nutrition Act of 2019**
Repeals SNAP's three-month time limit for out-of-work Americans.

» **H.R. 4297** *Gomez* **– Enhance Access To SNAP Act (EATS Act) of 2019**
Eliminates the outdated SNAP restrictions for college students.

» **H.R. 5848** *Cox, Gomez* **– Allowing Steady Savings by Eliminating Tests Act (ASSET Act) of 2020**
Eliminates asset tests in SNAP and LIHEAP eligibility, and raises SSI asset limits.

» **H.R. 1368** *Adams* **– Closing the Meal Gap Act of 2019**
Increases SNAP benefits by using the Low Cost Meal Plan, removing the cap on the SNAP shelter deduction, and raising the monthly minimum benefit to $25. Authorizes a Standard Excess Medical Deduction for persons who are elderly or have disabilities.

» **H.R. 3222** *Chu* **– No Federal Funds for Public Charge Act of 2019**
Bars Federal funds for the Department of Homeland Security "Inadmissibility on Public Charge Grounds."

» Support Disaster SNAP's structure of rapid response as a vital backstop to hunger following disaster, needed more than ever during California's wildfires, Public Safety Power Shutoffs, and other crises.

WESTERN CENTER ON LAW & POVERTY

California Food Policy Advocates

California ASSOCIATION OF Food Banks

Bold Strategies to Fight Hunger
Child Nutrition Reauthorization

California anti-hunger advocates ask our Delegation to support bold proposals that protect and strengthen the child nutrition programs, and prioritize investments in low-income children. **Any investments, however, must be made without undermining programs serving low-income communities.**

Nearly half of California's children live in or near poverty, the highest of any state. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the most important child hunger program. The 2018 Farm Bill that rejected SNAP time limits for families with children and gutting Broad Based Categorical Eligibility was a key victory against childhood hunger. Yet, with so many children experiencing hunger, we cannot simply protect the status quo. Child nutrition programs have not been improved since the 2010 Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act.

Expand access to WIC, free meals in child care & universal free school meals:

» **S. 2609 / H.R. 4684 – Universal School Meals Program Act**
No child should go hungry. Universal feeding guarantees this, and ends meal debt and shaming.

» **H.R. 5308 – Expanding Access to School Meals Act of 2019**
Improves direct certification and the Community Eligibility Provision that are vital tools for schools to achieve universal meal access.

» **S. 2358 – Wise Investment in Children Act of 2019**
Extends infant and postpartum women's eligibility to two years, and children to age 6.

» **S. 2501 – Healthy Foods for Young Children Act of 2019**
Pilots a mechanism for providing universal meal access to children in child care and other substantive changes to expand access to free meals for our youngest learners.

Prioritize investments when children are most hungry — summer & other out-of-school times:

» **S. 1941 / H.R. 3378** *Davis* **– Stop Child Summer Hunger Act**
Allow for Summer Lunch to be served through SNAP EBT.

» **S. 1908 / H.R. 2818 – Summer Meals Act of 2019**
Allow nonprofits, like food banks, to feed kids all year using the "Summer Seamless" option. Improve area eligibility for Summer Meals sites to address barriers to food access.

California is again leading, crafting proposals for bold solutions to advance universal free meal access. If enacted in federal law, these policies would increase food security for all children. **California has already achieved:**

» Preventing lunch shaming by ensuring that a child is not shamed or denied a meal and given an alternative meal when they lack the money for lunch.

» Ensuring that all public schools, including publicly funded charter schools, provide at least one meal a day to National School Lunch Program eligible K-12 children.

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