DATE

Rep. Jim Costa

2222 M St, Suite 305

Merced, CA 95340

Rep. Jimmy Panetta

100 W Alisal St

Salinas, CA 93901

Rep. Jeff Denham

4701 Sisk Road, Suite 202

Modesto, CA 95356

Rep. Doug LaMalfa

2399 Rickenbacker Way

Auburn, CA 95602

RE: Defend SNAP/CalFresh

Dear Reps. Costa, Denham, Lamalfa, and Panetta:

We are writing to you, as Representatives from California on the House Agriculture Committee, to express our strong support for SNAP— the nation’s first line of defense against hunger.

Hunger touches every corner of California and SNAP (known as CalFresh in California) provides life-saving benefits that help working families, children and seniors afford food and make ends in meet. Over 6 million people live in poverty in the Golden state and 4 million Californians (including two million children) are food insecure.

SNAP benefits are designed to target those most in need when they need it most. In California, three-quarters of SNAP participants are families with children and nearly half are working families. In **INSERT YOUR COUNTY HERE**, SNAP helped lift **INSERT NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS ON SNAP IN YOUR COUNTY** out of poverty, including **INSERT NUMBER OF CHILDREN ON SNAP IN YOUR COUNTY AND/OR NUMBER OF SENIORS**.

As the nation’s most effective federal stimulus, SNAP supports our state’s robust agricultural and retail sectors—linking low-income customers to much needed nutrition and driving local economic growth. Last year, SNAP pumped **$ XXX,XXX,XXX** in 100% federally funded benefits to **INSERT YOUR COUNTY HERE**, generating **$XXX,XXX,XXX** in local economic activity—supporting retailers, workers and economic growth in our county; In fact, if SNAP reached 100% of those eligible in **INSERT YOUR COUNTY HERE**, we would see $ XXX,XXX,XXX in additional benefits, and **$XXX,XXX,XXX** in local economic activity.

California’s anti-hunger network assists Californians in need through voluntary participation of members of the food industry, faith-based, tribal, public and non-profit organizations, and private citizens often partnered with state and federal governments. This informal network collects donations, distributes food, and provides relief to hungry Californians every day – but it is not enough to close the hunger gap in California without the SNAP Program.

As elected representatives from a diverse range of cities and communities across **INSERT YOUR COUNTY HERE**, we write to urge you to defend and strengthen SNAP because every community in California deserves to be hunger-free.