



April 8, 2025

To: Honorable Members of the California Congressional Delegation
Cc: Congressional Leadership
From: Seven Concerned California Organizations
Re: **Budget Reconciliation – Oppose SNAP Cost Shifts to States**

We, the undersigned organizations, write to *urge your strong opposition* to proposals currently being considered as a part of the budget reconciliation process, and any future consideration during any budget, appropriation, Farm Bill, or other policy debate, that would shift costs for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits or operations to states.

These cost shifts are cuts. California, which already faces a challenging budgetary climate, would be unable to bear these costs without reductions in benefits and eligibility for SNAP or other vital programs that serve Californians. Any cost shifts to states would spell the end of SNAP as the nation's most effective backstop against hunger. Food Banks already struggling to meet heightened demand would not be able to make up the difference; families would go hungry.

A cost shift is an especially problematic proposal that breaks the core promise of SNAP—since the program's inception as a federal entitlement—that the benefits are

100% federally funded. It also perpetuates a misconception that states should contribute to the program, when state and county governments have always shared expenses, program administration, outreach, and other components.

Currently, SNAP benefits return approximately \$1 billion in federal food assistance a month, or \$12 billion annually, to eligible households in California. A cost shift of even a small amount such as 10% would require California to pay \$1.2 billion to maintain benefits—an impossible amount, that is unsustainable for our state or any other to pay what has always been a federal responsibility.

If California were not to match, it would mean severe cuts such as to limit eligibility to some households, across the board cuts to benefits that are already only \$6 per person a day to all households, or other significant harms to the 5 million Californians who rely on SNAP to eat.

In fact, it is a double cut, as was [recently outlined in Agri-Pulse](#):

“t[o] illustrate a 10% SNAP federal-state match cost-share for one year, assuming states pay the full amount of the match so no one loses food benefits:

In 2024, Arkansas had 240,122 people participating in SNAP with over \$549 million in federal taxes returned to the state as food benefits. For a 10% cost-share, the state would’ve needed \$54.9 million in state revenue to meet the federal match requirement, and the state would have forgone \$54.9 million in federal taxes returned. This represents a delta of 20%, a \$109.8 million hit to the state economy (extra state taxes plus fewer federal taxes returned).”

For California, this would mean a \$1.2 billion cost shift is a \$2.4 billion hit to our state and local economy.

Nationwide, more than 41 million people, or 12% of the total population, relied on SNAP during FFY 2024 for sufficient food for themselves and their families. This included 5,380,000 California residents, 14% or 1 in 7 of the state population.¹ In California:

- More than 55% percent of SNAP recipients are families with children.
- More than 36% are in families with members who are older adults or are disabled.
- More than 30% are in working families.

¹ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, California SNAP Factsheet, January 21, 2025, https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/snap_factsheet_california.pdf

In addition to lifting hundreds of thousands of people above the poverty line in California each year, *SNAP offers a huge boost to local economies*—each \$1 in SNAP benefits creates as much as \$1.80 in economic activity as benefits are spent in grocery stores, and every \$1 billion in SNAP benefits creates an estimated 13,560 jobs across our farming, trucking, grocery and other sectors.²

This economic stimulus helps California's 30,753 authorized SNAP retailers, as well as the broader communities in which SNAP recipients live and work. If SNAP benefits and eligibility are cut, the *effects will be felt far beyond* the SNAP recipients themselves.

We urge you to vote against a budget plan that would cut SNAP, reject cost shifts to states, and oppose any other proposed cuts and harmful changes that may be brought forward during this Congress. Thank you for your vote to protect this vital program for individuals who directly receive SNAP benefits, and for the broader economic benefits these funds bring to your district.

Signed:

California Association of Food Banks

California Grocers Association

County Welfare Directors Association of California

End Child Poverty California

Service Employees International Union California

Urban Counties of California

Western Center on Law and Poverty

Cc: The Honorable John Thune, Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Chuck Schumer, Minority Leader, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries, Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives

² Patrick Canning and Brian Stacy, "The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Economy: New Estimates of the SNAP Multiplier, USDA Economic Research Service, July 18, 2019, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details?pubid=93528>