# Support Californians & Mitigate the Harm of H.R. 1

## $42 million (across 2027-2030) to sustain CalFresh Outreach

California's CalFresh outreach program launched in 2003 to help residents resolve challenges with the application process and navigate the public benefits system.



It is funded by community-based nonprofits and local entities, with federal matching funds through SNAP State Administrative Expenses.

H.R. 1 reduced the federal SNAP State Administrative Expense reimbursement from 50% to 25%. **Without additional state investment this year, many community organizations may need to halt CalFresh outreach services, leaving vulnerable Californians without help navigating an increasingly complex system.**

To ensure that the CalFresh Outreach network can continue its vital work in its communities, we request $42 million in the 2027-28 budget to sustain the CalFresh Outreach network for the next three years.

### CalFresh Outreach: A Lifeline for Families and the Economy

- Many Californians face significant barriers when applying for or keeping CalFresh benefits, including misinformation, low digital literacy, long county call-center wait times, and a complex eligibility process.
- About 19% of eligible Californians (roughly 1 million people) are not enrolled in CalFresh as of 2022. Nationally, SNAP participation has dropped to its lowest level in 17 years, even though economic conditions have not improved.
- About 25% of CalFresh applications are denied due to procedural barriers, such as missing an interview or failing to submit documents.
- Outreach staff help people overcome the barriers that prevent them from applying for and managing their benefits on their own.
- Support helps close the gap for the nearly one-third of Californians who do not complete the initial public-benefits application within a week on **BenefitsCal.com**.

CalFresh Outreach workers partner with college food pantries, senior living facilities, local counties, faith-based organizations, and more to connect the most vulnerable Californians, including children, families, older adults, people with disabilities, veterans, college students, and English language learners, to CalFresh.

*"This support (CalFresh) helps stretch my limited budget and provide the nourishment my children and I need to stay healthy. Without the guidance and care from CalFresh Outreach staff, I would have given up."*

CalFresh Recipient

2025 Community Impact

**161** Organizations in the CalFresh Outreach Network supported 58 counties

**~1,438,000** individuals learn about CalFresh to see if they may be eligible and interested in applying

**~331,000** households apply for benefits

**~33,700** submit their 6-month or yearly renewal paperwork to continue receiving CalFresh

Bringing in a total of:

**$1.32 billion** in federal food benefits



**$2.36 billion** in local economic activity

## Sustain the CalFresh Outreach Network ($42M One-Time)

We urge policymakers to support a one-time $42 million investment to keep CalFresh Outreach partners serving Californians in need for the full three-year federal contract cycle. Given that CalFresh Outreach operates on a three-year contract, providing upfront funding for the entire cycle ensures outreach partners can maintain uninterrupted services.



*"Community-based organizations are the trusted messengers who help seniors, families, students, and mixed-status households navigate an increasingly complex system. Without a one-time state investment, we risk dismantling the very network that ensures eligible Californians can access the food assistance they qualify for."*

San Diego Community-Based Organization

Questions? Contact gabriela.davidson@cafoodbanks.org and greg@hgra.us