

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 26, 2023

Dear President Biden,

We commend you on your recent budget proposal that calls for critical investments in health care, education, nutrition, and other vital services. Your budget stands in sharp contrast to the emerging Republican budget proposals that would slash funding for these programs and take health care and food assistance away from millions of children in low-income families, working parents, older Americans, and people with disabilities. We are particularly concerned with Republicans' demands to cut our nation's most effective program to address hunger and food insecurity, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Millions of Americans, particularly families with children, households of color, and people in Indigenous communities, face high levels of food insecurity. As the Chairs of the Congressional Black, Hispanic, Asian Pacific American ("Tri-Caucus"), we believe it's essential to protect SNAP from cuts and harmful changes in any budget or farm bill legislation.

As you know, SNAP is a highly successful program. Research shows its important impact in reducing hunger and poverty and also producing long-term gains including greater educational attainment for students and improved health outcomes and reduced medical costs for families. SNAP is vital not only for beneficiaries but for grocery stores and small businesses across this country. The critical improvement you and Secretary Tom Vilsack made to raise the level of SNAP benefits through the Thrifty Food Plan was the first real increase for program beneficiaries in 40 years, and we are committed to protecting against Republicans' efforts to undo that process.

This critical food assistance program is very important to our communities. Cuts in SNAP would have a profound impact on low-income Black, Brown, and Indigenous households who face higher levels of food insecurity. According to USDA data, in 2021 food insecurity affected about 20 percent of households headed by a Black adult, 18 percent headed by an American Indian or Alaska Native adult, and 16 percent headed by a Hispanic adult — all more than twice the share of households headed by a white adult (7 percent).¹ In addition, USDA data reports prevalence of food insufficiency in 2022 was highest among Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander households (23.6 percent), Black households (19.7 percent), and American Indian and Alaska Native households (19.6 percent)². More recently, USDA reported that child food insufficiency affected 23.2 percent of Black households, 21.9 percent of Hispanic households, and 13 percent of Asian households in February 2023 (compared to 8.2 percent of White non-Hispanic households).³

¹ [Coleman-Jensen, Alisha, Rabbitt, Matthew P., Gregory, Christian A., and Singh, Anita, "Household Food Security in the United States in 2021," USDA Economic Research Service.](#)

² ["Food and Consumers - Food Sufficiency During the Pandemic: The Household Pulse Survey," USDA Economic Research Service.](#)

³ [Ibid.](#)

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

SNAP is highly effective in lowering food insecurity rates and plays a critical role in mitigating racial disparities in rates of food insecurity. Republican efforts to cut SNAP will only exacerbate these disparities and must be blocked.

Emerging proposals from key conservative Republicans to cut SNAP and make it harder for people to qualify and access benefits will most likely, simply put, take food away from potentially millions of our nation’s poorest children, adults, veterans, and people with disabilities. We are particularly concerned with the new Republican proposal to expand SNAP’s already harsh work reporting requirement that could, according to an independent analysis, could take food assistance away from up to 10 million people, including vast numbers of poor children, veterans, and older Americans.⁴

We cannot allow Republicans to enact legislation that would increase food insecurity, harm our grocery stores and small businesses around the county, and result in millions of our most vulnerable families and individuals losing their food assistance. We are grateful for the strong position you articulated in your February speech in Baltimore when you said, “If Republicans try to take away people’s healthcare, increase costs for middle-class families, or push Americans into poverty, I’m going to stop them.” We stand ready to work with you to ensure that any budget and farm bill legislation that moves through Congress this year will protect SNAP and our communities.

Sincerely,



Steven Horsford
Chairman
Congressional Black Caucus



Judy Chu
Chairwoman
Congressional Asian Pacific Asian Caucus



Nanette Barragán
Chairwoman
Congressional Hispanic Caucus

⁴ [Bergh, Katie, and Rosenbaum, Dottie, “House Republicans’ Proposals Could Take Food Away from Millions of Low-Income Individuals and Families,” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.](#)