

SNAP: A Public Policy Priority

DALLAS COALITION FOR HUNGER SOLUTIONS

SEPTEMBER 15, 2017

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Largest Federal Nutrition Programs

- 1. SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)**
2. National School Lunch Program
3. School Breakfast Program
4. CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program)
5. WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children)
6. SFSP (The Summer Food Service Program)
7. TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program)

Public vs. Private Nutrition Assistance



Public Spending



Private Spending

SNAP Review

- By far the most significant anti-hunger program in the United States
- Average monthly benefit per household is \$255
- Lifts over 10 million people out of poverty
- For every \$1 of SNAP benefits there is a \$1.79 boost to the local economy
- Increases household nutritional intake
- Plays important counter-cyclical role by providing more assistance when economic downturns cause the need to grow

SNAP Policy Formation

Federal Role



Established SNAP as a federal entitlement program to address food insecurity

Authorizes SNAP in the Farm Bill, which is set to be reauthorized in 2018 (every 5 years)

Congress can legislate changes to the program at any time, however

State Role



Administers the SNAP program on behalf of the federal government

State legislatures have some flexibility with regard to eligibility criteria and administrative procedures

How SNAP Works

SNAP provides benefits, adjusted to income and family size, based on USDA's thrifty food plan – which is the least generous of the four options (thrifty, low-cost, moderate-cost, and liberal).



How SNAP Works

Gross monthly income generally must be at or below 130 percent of the poverty line. Households with an elderly or disabled member need not meet this limit.



How SNAP Works

Net monthly income, or income after deductions are applied for items such as high housing costs and child care, must be less than or equal to the poverty line.



How SNAP Works

Household assets must fall below certain limits, although most states – with Texas as a significant exception – have waived this requirement.



How SNAP Works

Most unemployed childless adults are limited to three months of benefits, unless they are working at least 20 hours per week or participating in a qualifying workfare or job training program. States may seek waivers on this requirement for areas with high unemployment.



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- Negotiations regarding the FY 2018 Budget are ongoing
- **Any policy changes to SNAP will likely be determined through the 2018 Farm Bill**

How Can You Advocate for SNAP?

- Build relationships with federal, state and local legislators in North Texas
- Provide written and oral testimony at legislative hearings
- Participate in direct advocacy initiatives: Go to Washington or Austin
- Respond to action alerts and sign on to letters of support
- Sponsor educational meetings for constituents
- Collect client stories to support policy goals
- Write opinion pieces for news outlets
- **Lend support to other organizations who lead advocacy efforts**



Immediate Action Steps

1. Sign the DCHS Petition in Support of SNAP

2. Sign Up to Receive the Coalition's *Policy Matters* Newsletter

E-mail Sara Albert to be subscribed at sara.albert55@gmail.com