June 29, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader McConnell, and Leader Schumer,

As you consider additional measures to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, we urge you to boost and protect the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to address rising food insecurity and unprecedented demand at area food banks. Specifically, we ask you to increase the maximum SNAP benefit by 15 percent and increase the minimum monthly benefit to $30 throughout the duration of this crisis, as well as suspend administrative rules with the potential to weaken program eligibility.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused food insecurity to double among all households and triple among households with children according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In just nine weeks, the jobless rate is now the highest since the Great Depression with 38.6 million people having sought jobless benefits. Among job losses and other health and economic strains on families, the cost of groceries has seen its highest one-month increase in almost 50 years according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistic’s monthly Consumer Price Index report. This is a tipping point for families who are already struggling to stretch their food dollars.

The crisis has further deepened the inequities that existed long before the onset of the pandemic, with households of color disproportionately impacted. In April 2020, more than one in three households with children, and approximately two in five Black and Hispanic households with children, were food insecure. With schools and childcare centers closed, families are stretched even further to find the resources needed to feed their children who regularly receive meals at school and childcare.

SNAP is the largest and most effective nutrition program in the country, serving as our nation’s first line of defense against hunger and food insecurity. According to the latest Census data, SNAP lifted 3.4 million individuals out of poverty in 2017, including 1.5 million children. A majority of SNAP participants, nearly 70 percent, are families with children and research also demonstrates 74 percent of adult SNAP participants are working or have worked within a year of SNAP participation. Though benefits average approximately $1.40 per person per meal, recent
studies suggest every $1 of SNAP benefits during an economic downturn generates between $1.50 and $1.80 in economic activity.

Increasing SNAP benefits is a proven effective way to address hunger and pump money back into the economy, particularly during an economic downturn. According to USDA’s Economic Research Service, after Congress increased SNAP benefits in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, the prevalence of food insecurity fell by 2.2 percentage points among low-income households and the prevalence of very low food security fell by 2.0 percentage points. The ARRA boost also helped increase food expenditures by 5.4 percent among low-income households.

Overwhelmed food banks and emergency food providers across the country are racing to fill the immediate need, but they cannot match the reach of SNAP. According to Feeding America “for every one meal that the nation’s network of food banks provides, SNAP provides nine.” With so many American impacted by this crisis, it is critical that Congress work to provide a sustainable safety net that ensures a basic level of nutritional support for those struggling in our communities.

For this reason, we request the immediate consideration of legislation that will make critical investments in SNAP at a time when people need it most. Specifically, we believe that Congress must take up provisions to strengthen SNAP, bolster vulnerable communities across the country, and give a hand up to millions of people facing financial hardship as a result of the pandemic.

Sincerely,

Marcia Fudge  
Member of Congress

John Katko  
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress
Boost and Support SNAP during COVID-19 Funding Letter
List of Signatories
June 29, 2020

Adam Smith
Adriano Espaillat
Al Green
Alan Lowenthal
Albio Sires
Alcee L. Hastings
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
André Carson
Ann Kirkpatrick
Ann McLane Kuster
Anna G. Eshoo
Anthony Brindisi
Anthony G. Brown
Antonio Delgado
Ayanna Pressley
Barbara Lee
Ben McAdams
Bennie G. Thompson
Bill Foster
Bobby L. Rush
Bobby Scott
Bonnie Watson Coleman
Brendan F. Boyle
Brian Fitzpatrick
Brian Higgins
C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
Carolyn Maloney
Cedric L. Richmond
Chellie Pingree
Cheri Bustos
Chris Pappas
Conor Lamb
Daniel T. Kildee
Danny K. Davis
Darren Soto
David Cicilline
David Price
David Scott
David Trone
Debbie Dingell
Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Derek Kilmer
Diana DeGette
Dina Titus
Don Young
Donna E. Shalala
Doris Matsui
Dwight Evans
Ed Case
Eddie Bernice Johnson
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Eliot L. Engel
Elissa Slotkin
Emanuel Cleaver, II
Eric Swalwell
Filemon Vela
Frank Pallone, Jr.
Frederica S. Wilson
G. K. Butterfield
Gerald E. Connolley
Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.
Grace F. Napolitano
Grace Meng
Gwen Moore
Henry Cuellar
Ilhan Omar
J. Luis Correa
Jackie Speier
Jahana Hayes
Jamie Raskin
Jan Schakowsky
Jared Golden
Jared Huffman
Jerrold Nadler
Jerry McNerney
Jim Cooper
Jim Costa
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Representative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jim Himes</td>
<td>Nydia M. Velázquez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Langevin</td>
<td>Paul D. Tonko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James P. McGovern</td>
<td>Pete Aguilar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy Gomez</td>
<td>Peter A. DeFazio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy Panetta</td>
<td>Peter Welch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joaquin Castro</td>
<td>Rashida Tlaib</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Neguse</td>
<td>Raúl Grijalva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John B. Larson</td>
<td>Raul Ruiz, M.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Garamendi</td>
<td>Richard Neal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Katko</td>
<td>Rick Larson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John P. Sarbanes</td>
<td>Ro Khanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>José E. Serrano</td>
<td>Robin L. Kelly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph D. Morelle</td>
<td>Rosa DeLauro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph P. Kennedy, III</td>
<td>Ruben Gallego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josh Gottheimer</td>
<td>Salud O. Carbajal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josh Harder</td>
<td>Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyce Beatty</td>
<td>Scott H. Peters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Vargas</td>
<td>Sean Patrick Maloney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judy Chu</td>
<td>Seth Moulton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julia Brownley</td>
<td>Sharice L. Davids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen Bass</td>
<td>Sheila Jackson Lee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katherine Clark</td>
<td>Stephen F. Lynch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen M. Rice</td>
<td>Steve Cohen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathy Castor</td>
<td>Susan A. Davis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie Porter</td>
<td>Susan Wild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kendra S. Horn</td>
<td>Susie Lee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda T. Sánchez</td>
<td>Suzan DelBene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Blunt Rochester</td>
<td>Suzanne Bonamici</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lori Trahan</td>
<td>Sylvia R. Garcia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucille Roybal-Allard</td>
<td>Ted Deutsch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madeleine Dean</td>
<td>Ted Lieu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcia Fudge</td>
<td>Terri A. Sewell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcy Kaptur</td>
<td>Thomas R. Suozzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark DeSaulnier</td>
<td>Tim Ryan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Pocan</td>
<td>T.J. Cox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Takano</td>
<td>Tom O'Halleran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Gay Scanlon</td>
<td>Val B. Demings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max Rose</td>
<td>Vicente Gonzalez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maxine Waters</td>
<td>Wm Lacy Clay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Levin</td>
<td>William R. Keating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Thompson</td>
<td>Yvette D. Clarke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanette Diaz Barragán</td>
<td>Zoe Lofgren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norma J. Torres</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>