

Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

TITLE IV - NUTRITION

The Senate Republican Farm Bill Framework for Title IV maintains the current benefit and eligibility structure for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients and improves product availability in food assistance programs. The reforms to Title IV focus on SNAP administration: holding states accountable to ensure proper administration of the program and reining in executive overreach.

In 2022, quality control (QC) data indicated that the percentage of SNAP benefits issued in the form of overpayments totaled 9.84%. Making administrative improvements to SNAP that reduce the overpayment rate is expected to generate billions in savings and would protect the integrity of the program and the farm bill into the future.

SNAP spending has increased largely due to USDA's 2021 Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) reevaluation, increased participation and higher food costs. According to the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of Management and Budget, USDA's 2021 TFP reevaluation process resulted in an increase in SNAP benefits of \$250 to \$300 billion over 10 years - an unprecedented increase resulting from an abuse of executive power. The Republican framework restores Congress' constitutional spending authority by returning to a cost-neutral and transparent process for future five-year reevaluations of the TFP based on the most up-to-date consumption data and dietary guidance, all while ensuring an annual inflationary adjustment.

- **Requires all payment errors to be reported** in the quality control process.
- Requires states to **return SNAP overpayments** to the U.S. Department of Treasury and recoup SNAP overpayments due to household fraud.
- **Establishes a state-federal cost share** for habitually error-prone states to cover a portion of SNAP benefits if they have consistently high error rates.
- Requires future **Thrifty Food Plan updates to be cost neutral**, reestablishing the norm that occurred from 1976-2021, and maintains the **annual inflationary benefit adjustment**.
- Allows all forms of fruits and vegetables to be eligible under the **Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program**, enabling affordable and year-round access.
- Improves the dairy incentives pilots by allowing additional milk, yogurt and cheese to be eligible and establishes the **Dairy Nutrition Incentive Program**.
- Bolsters **Buy American** requirements across nutrition programs.
- Provides staffing flexibilities by allowing contractors to perform administrative functions under SNAP to alleviate state staffing shortages.
- Encourages coordination between state agencies offering employment and training (E&T) to SNAP participants and requires a study on outcomes for E&T participants.
- **Increases security of EBT transactions** by providing households with more secure payment options.

