



- U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren
- U.S. Senator Edward Markey
- U.S. Representative Katherine Clark
- U.S. Representative Richard Neal
- U.S. Representative James McGovern
- U.S. Representative Stephen Lynch
- U.S. Representative William Keating
- U.S. Representative Lori Trahan
- U.S. Representative Ayanna Pressley
- U.S. Representative Seth Moulton
- U.S. Representative Jake Auchincloss

January 13, 2025

Dear Members of the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation:

On behalf of the food retailer, farming and anti-hunger communities, we wish to thank you for your unwavering support for federal nutrition programs over the years, including your support for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). We also write to share our deep concern regarding policy proposals to both limit access and reduce the value of SNAP benefits, including recent press reports that Congress is considering **a \$30 Billion cut to SNAP through a budget reconciliation bill.**¹ We urge you to do everything in your power to work with your colleagues to protect SNAP from eligibility restrictions or cuts to the value of monthly benefits.

SNAP currently serves 1 in 6 Massachusetts residents. Roughly 85% of our 1.1 million SNAP recipients (within 672K households) are older adults, persons with severe disabilities and children, with the remaining 15% representing low-wage working parents and temporarily unemployed and/or underemployed individuals.² SNAP currently provides an average household benefit of \$331 per month, bringing to the Commonwealth **nearly \$3 billion annually in federal nutrition dollars** to meet the nutritional needs of our residents while at the same time supporting local and regional grocers, farmers and other food producers. For decades, SNAP has been the nation's first line of

¹ Politico Pro 11/28/2024, [GOP eyes climate-ag, nutrition funding for possible 2025 reconciliation package](#)

² DTA [Performance Scorecards](#), November 2024

defense against hunger. Despite its modest benefits of only **\$6.20 per person per day**, SNAP is effective at reducing food insecurity, alleviating poverty, and supporting better health³, educational attainment, and economic security for participants.

As food retailers, we recognize the importance of treating all of our customers fairly and offering food products that meet a range of household diets and budgets. The SNAP program in particular allows low-income customers the dignity and ability to purchase food that meets the family's dietary and cultural needs. SNAP delivers nutrition benefits efficiently through the EBT system, enabling our retailers to process payments uniformly and ensure eligible households seamlessly transact their benefits like all other electronic payment (debit/credit) customers. SNAP can only be used to purchase food at USDA approved EBT retailers. The SNAP program remains an important public-private partnership that meets a critical basic need.

As food banks and anti-hunger organizations, we see daily how essential SNAP benefits are to the low-income households we serve. Since the end of the pandemic, we have continued to see a rise in food insecurity in the Commonwealth due to rising food costs, overall inflation and the end of pandemic benefits. Indeed, many of the food banks report a persistent increase in demand from their local food partners, with The Greater Boston Food Bank reporting serving more than double the number of people it did before the pandemic - from 300,000 clients every month in 2019 to 600,000 monthly clients in 2024,⁴ and the Worcester County Food Bank reporting a 105% increase. Yet the food banks and partner organizations do not have enough emergency and supplemental food - often donated by retailer partners - to meet the growing demand.

We urge the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation to seek bi-partisan solutions to ensure SNAP is fully funded, and to defend SNAP from cuts or block grants. We believe that low-income families, the public health of local communities, the economy and country are stronger when all residents in Massachusetts and throughout the nation have access to the nutrition needed to live healthy and productive lives. The Massachusetts food retailers, food banks and anti-hunger organizations and our local food system organizations stand ready to work with you to protect and support SNAP and all federal nutrition programs that serve our most vulnerable residents.

Sincerely,

Food Bank of Western Massachusetts
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Massachusetts Food System Collaborative
Project Bread
Worcester County Food Bank

The Greater Boston Food Bank
Massachusetts Food Association
Merrimack Valley Food Bank
Retailers Association of Massachusetts

³ Food Research and Action Center, December 2024 [Connecting Patients to SNAP in Healthcare Settings](#)

⁴ Greater Boston Food Bank, [Food Equity and Access in Massachusetts 2024](#)