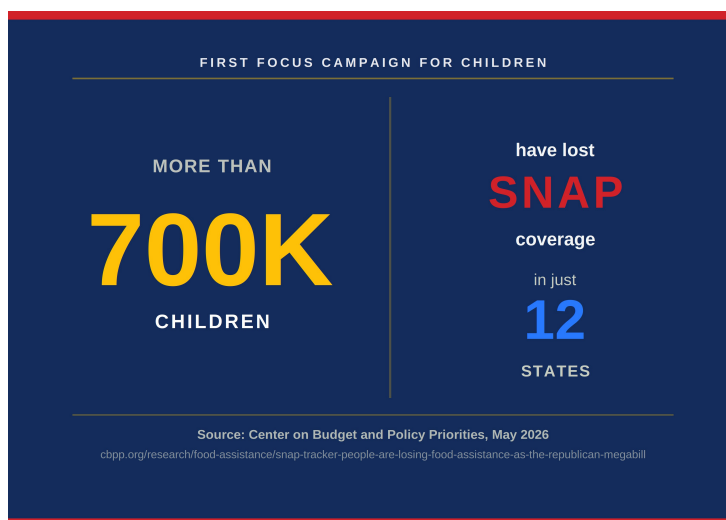


THE SENATE MUST PUT KIDS FIRST IN ANY FARM LEGISLATION



The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the nation's largest anti-hunger program and first line of defense against food insecurity. Sixteen million children and their families rely on SNAP — not just for nutrition, but as a program that improves children's health, educational outcomes, and overall well-being.¹

SNAP faces an imminent crisis later this year. For the first time ever, states will have to pick up more of the cost of SNAP — starting first this fall with more of the administrative cost, and then even more next year when they have to begin picking up more of the benefit cost. No state is in a fiscal position to handle these new costs. That's why the Republican and Democratic governors of all 50 states have come together to ask Congress to delay implementation of these changes. The governors note: "These impacts cut across states of all sizes and political affiliations and, if applied based on disrupted data, risk undermining ongoing investments in program integrity and ultimately the viability of the program."²



Given the urgency in addressing this self-imposed catastrophe — and SNAP's usual place in the Farm Bill — any farm legislation taken up by the Senate this year must include a delay of this cost shift.

The crisis is not an abstract one. Already, almost 3.5 million fewer people are participating in SNAP since the passage of H.R. 1.³ The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that more than 700,000 children already have lost SNAP coverage in just the 12 states that track such data. CBPP estimates that the number nationwide is as high as 1 million children and will continue to climb.

Economic data does not suggest that the drop in participation is because children and their families are better off: grocery prices are higher;⁴ the unemployment rate has notched upward;⁵ and though wages have ticked up, stronger gains have accrued to higher-income households⁶ — not the families who rely on SNAP. What has been true is that states are implementing new barriers to SNAP participation required by H.R. 1, and are taking steps to reduce SNAP enrollment.⁷ In this context, the USDA participation figures are most likely understood to mean that the need for the SNAP program is the same as it was before (if not greater) — but now 3.5 million fewer people are receiving benefits.

Losing SNAP also deals a double blow to kids: children enrolled in SNAP are also automatically eligible for free school meals. Losing this automatic eligibility leads to stigma, bullying, or increased hunger at school, a trend that advocates are already seeing firsthand.⁸

Any farm legislation taken up this year must delay the SNAP cost shift.

¹ Bolt, Chad. "Children Need Congress to Repeal the SNAP Cost Shift to States." First Focus on Children, November 20, 2025. <https://firstfocus.org/update/children-need-congress-to-repeal-the-snap-cost-shift-to-states/>

² National Governors Association, "NGA Joins Coalition Letter Outlining SNAP Recommendations," January 8, 2026. <https://www.nga.org/advocacy-communications/letters-nga/nga-joins-coalition-letter-outlining-snap-recommendations>

³ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation and Benefit Summary, April 2026. <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/snap-4fmonthly-4.pdf>

⁴ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. Food Price Outlook: Summary Findings. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-price-outlook/summary-findings>

⁵ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Employment Situation—May 2026. USDL-26-1045. <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empst.pdf>

⁶ Cunningham, Mary. "U.S. Wealth Gap Widest in Three Decades as High Interest Rates Hurt Lower-Income Americans." CBS News, September 23, 2024. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/us-wealth-gap-widest-in-three-decades-federal-reserve/>

⁷ National Conference of State Legislatures. How States Are Responding to New SNAP Requirements. April 17, 2025. <https://www.ncsl.org/state-legislatures-news/details/how-states-are-responding-to-new-snap-requirements>

⁸ Food Research & Action Center. "Advocates Warn SNAP Cuts Are Deepening Hunger." Food Research & Action Center Blog, May 1, 2026. <https://frac.org/blog/advocates-warn-snap-cuts-are-deepening-hunger>