

Farm Bill Sign-On Letter Draft

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Date

Dear *LEGISLATOR*,

We are writing today on behalf of the over 1.8 million Illinois residents who participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), in regards to the reauthorization of the 2018 Farm Bill.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) should be strengthened, not weakened by cuts proposed in the House version of the Farm Bill. The House version SNAP cuts would take food assistance away from over 2 million low-income households throughout the country. One of the harmful provisions included in the House version of the bill is an expansion of work requirements for SNAP recipients and harsher sanctions for those who can't comply with the work requirements. These requirements could increase administrative burden on our state and cause thousands of hardworking individuals to lose their benefits while doing little to support job training and education, and the funding from SNAP cuts will be diverted towards employment and training programs that are not proven. Another harmful provision bars formerly incarcerated individuals from participating in the SNAP. We should be lifting up returning citizens through programming to help them succeed, not further stigmatizing them and making food harder for them to access.

By contrast, the Senate version of the bill strengthens SNAP through quality improvement provisions and expanding SNAP Employment and Training programs. The Senate version expands funding for the pilot employment and training programs that have been successful here in Illinois and across the country, ensuring that job training programs are proven successful before they are implemented. The quality improvement provisions in the bill would serve to strengthen SNAP, helping it to run more smoothly and improving states' ability to determine if individuals are receiving benefits in more than one state.

Hunger is a public health issue that impacts millions of individuals throughout the country and state. SNAP has been shown to both lift individuals and families out of poverty and provide vital economic support to our state. SNAP provided nearly \$3 billion in assistance to Illinoisans in 2017 and supports 9,500 retailers in Illinois. Nationwide, SNAP accounts for 10% of purchased food, and 80% of authorized SNAP retailers are small businesses.

In *DISTRICT/COUNTY*, there are *NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS* who participate in SNAP. % of these include someone who is disabled, % of these include someone who is 60 years of age or ___ older, and % of these include at least one child under the age of 18. These households in your district/county would be impacted significantly by changes to SNAP that would weaken the

program. Additionally, SNAP as it stands is already supporting workers in our state: % of the households participating in SNAP in *DISTRICT/COUNTY*, a majority of the households receiving SNAP, have at least one person working.

Children are significantly impacted by hunger and food hardship. In 2016-2017 in Illinois, 17.4% of households with children struggled with food hardship, 1.4 times higher than households without children. The House version of the Farm Bill would further compound childrens' struggle with hunger: higher eligibility cutoffs for SNAP included in the bill would mean decreased eligibility and participation in the federal child nutrition programs such as the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program.

We urge you, on behalf of the hardworking people who depend on SNAP, to vote against provisions in the Farm Bill that would be harmful towards the program and support the Senate version of the bill.

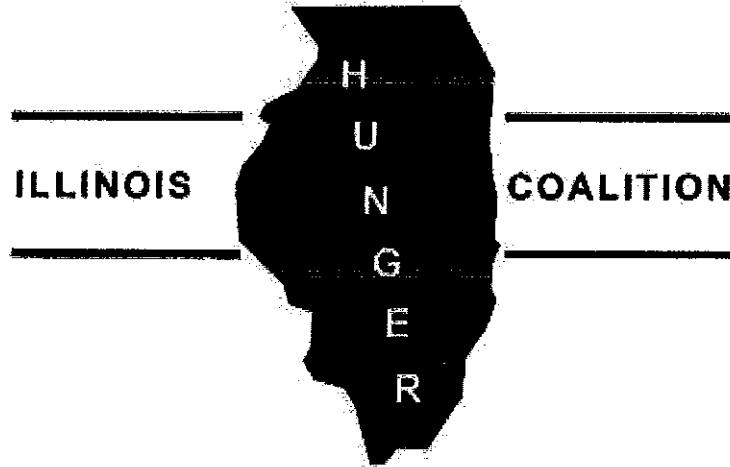
Sincerely,

Diane Doherty
Executive Director, Illinois Hunger Coalition

Sign ons:
Constituents

Illinois Residents

Partner Organizations

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Farm Bill Update

Hello, advocates:

As the week comes to a close, we want to thank you for all your hard work so far advocating for hardworking individuals and families across the country. Differences are still being worked out on the Farm Bill, but we continue to be up against the harmful provisions found in the House version- just today, Speaker Ryan [released a video](#) in favor of those provisions.

There is still time to add your name to the [sign on letter](#) that we will be sending to Illinois' representatives. You can sign onto the letter on behalf of yourself and/or an organization you work for. Fill out [this form](#) or contact the IHC directly to be added onto the letter or if you have any questions.

Also, on September 13th, we will be joining hunger advocates across the country in a call-in day in favor of SNAP. You can use the district locator below or call the toll-free number hosted by Feeding America (1-888-398-8702) to be connected to your representative.

Finally, remember to join the conversation on social media using [#protectSNAP](#) and [#FarmBill2018](#)!

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District Locator

For more information on these issues or to receive outreach and educational materials contact the Illinois Hunger Coalition at ilhungercoalition@gmail.com

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Chicago, IL 60606

Hunger Hotline **1-800-359-2163**

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