



Senate Farm Bill is the Way Forward for SNAP

In June, the Senate passed a bipartisan farm bill that will keep the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) strong and safe for working families. The bill protects SNAP while making several critical improvements. The bill strengthens the relationship between employers and SNAP recipients, invests in pilots that will maintain SNAP's integrity, and modernizes SNAP's supporting technology.

The farm bill that the House of Representatives passed stands in stark contrast. It would take away food assistance from 30,000 needy parents, children, veterans and working people. The bill would make big cuts in SNAP benefits, aimed directly at low-income working families with children. It would also add aggressive new work reporting requirements by requiring families to file pages of bureaucratic paperwork. These requirements would put a significant burden on both the working families who would file and the state governments who don't currently have the capacity to administer these requirements.



SNAP is a key tool that keeps working families economically secure. SNAP participants include hard working families, unemployed workers who fell on bad luck and retirees with fixed incomes. Perhaps most importantly, 70 percent of SNAP participants live in households with children – SNAP helps these families improve food security, especially during the summer months when children do not have access to free or reduced lunch at school.

SNAP also benefits our state's economy. When people spend SNAP benefits at grocery stores and farmer's markets every month, those businesses then spend that money on hiring more people and buying more goods to stock their shelves. It also allows recipients to spend more of their own money on other things like school supplies and car repairs. Every \$10 of SNAP spending generates up to an additional \$18 of economic activity – in other words, the \$1.4 billion in SNAP benefits given to Arizonans in 2016 generated up to \$2.3 billion of economic activity throughout the state.

How SNAP helps the economy



As Congress begins to hash out an agreement between the two farm bills, the Arizona Center for Economic Progress is encouraging our Representatives and Senators to support the bi-partisan Senate version of the Farm Bill. SNAP is a proven tool to fight poverty and provide food assistance to people who need it the most.

The difference between the two bills is crystal clear: The Senate bill offers a bright path forward, while the House bill threatens the progress we've made towards eliminating poverty.