

June 11, 2025

Senator James C. Justice

G12 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Justice:

As the Senate negotiates its budget reconciliation bill, the West Virginia organizations, congregations, food pantries, and small businesses listed below urge you to use your voice and your vote to speak out against proposed cuts to SNAP.

Given that SNAP is the most effective anti-hunger program in the state, we ask that you oppose structural changes, cuts, and efforts to weaken SNAP. Cutting SNAP would have devastating consequences for the 278,978 children, parents, older adults, veterans, people with disabilities, and others in our state who rely on the program to keep hunger at bay.

The research is clear: SNAP improves health outcomes, reduces child hospitalizations and developmental delays, and supports educational success. It also decreases health care spending and helps stabilize families during times of crisis and job loss. SNAP is an efficient program as it also directly certifies children for free school meals and provides adjunctive eligibility for WIC — which decreases administrative burden and increases food security.

The House bill currently under consideration in the Senate Agriculture committee would cut SNAP by over \$290 billion and weaken the program's response to alleviating hunger in our state by reducing the number of people eligible to participate in SNAP — taking their benefits away completely — and reducing benefits for the children, older adults, veterans, and others who continue to participate in the program. **This would be the largest cut to the program in SNAP's history and we ask you to remember your pledge to not hurt the people of West Virginia.**

Another disturbing provision in the House bill is a massive restructuring of SNAP's funding model. Under current law, SNAP is a federal-state partnership — the federal government pays *100 percent of food benefits and shares administrative costs equally with states*. The House bill would change that by shifting 5 to 25 percent of the benefit costs and additional administrative burdens onto states. *If enacted today, West Virginia would need to cover 25 percent of the SNAP benefits costs and 75 percent of the administrative costs.* **This cost**

**shift would result in an unfunded mandate — forcing our state government to choose between cutting SNAP or other critical programs to balance our state budget.**

The cuts and cost shifts in the House bill would lead to greater food insecurity and place even greater pressure on our food banks and charities, which already struggle to meet demand. For every one meal provided by a food bank, SNAP provides nine. Our state's charitable food system cannot fill the gap that would be created by the magnitude of these cuts.

An additional loss to West Virginia's food security and nutrition ecosystem in the House bill would be the elimination of the highly efficient and effective SNAP Ed program, the only statewide nutrition education program that supports farmers and families through programs like produce prescriptions, kids markets, and Kids Market @ the Store.

Lastly, we know that SNAP has dramatic and direct impacts on our state economy. Every \$1 in benefits generates up to \$1.80 in local economies during economic downturns. In our state, 2,170 retailers, farmers' markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs), and roadside stands are authorized to accept SNAP — impacting local jobs, wages, and tax revenues.

On behalf of the organizations, small businesses, food pantries and congregations listed below, we ask you to protect SNAP, and to stand up for West Virginia families and our local economies. We appreciate your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

American Friends Service Committee - WV

ABLE Families

Catholic Charities West Virginia

The Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia

St. Mark's United Methodist Church (Charleston)

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

St. John's Episcopal Church (Charleston)

St. James Episcopal Church, Lewisburg, WV

Mercer County Coalition for Healthy Communities

Welch Charge of the United Methodist Church

Sister of Christian Charity

Temple Israel Social Action Committee

Sunset Berry Farm

Lewisburg/Fairlea Food Locker

Greenbrier County Health Alliance

Congregation of St. Joseph, Associate

Doddridge County Farmer's Market

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

T. L. Fruits and Vegetables

Team for West Virginia Children

Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia

Sunset Berry Farms

Talk-to-Me Program in Berkeley County Schools

Nature-Heart Counseling

Larna LLC

West Virginia Voices of Hunger

Catholics for a Sustainable Economy

Phat Daddy's LLC

Temple Israel Social Action Committee

West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy

WV Citizen Action

WVU Center for Resilient Communities

Wellspring of Greenbrier Inc.

NAACP - Jefferson County

Zion Episcopal Church, Charles Town

WV FOOD ER

West Virginia Conference of the NAACP

Let's Grow Together Demonstration Garden

Mountain State Justice

Department of Social & Environmental Justice for Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph

WV Faith Collective

Southern Appalachia Labor School

Greenbrier Valley Indivisible

Pocahontas County Indivisible

Jefferson County Indivisible

WV NOW