



November 17, 2021

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations

Dear Chair Leahy, Ranking Member Shelby, Chair DeLauro, and Ranking Member Granger:

As the Senate and House Appropriations Committees consider the fiscal year 2022 Agriculture appropriations bills, we urge you to adopt language that ensures the availability of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in case of disruptions to the budget. Specifically, we recommend language that provides:

- Such sums as may be necessary for unanticipated costs incurred during the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2022; and,
- An advance payment for the first quarter of fiscal year 2023

As an appropriated entitlement, state and local agencies administering SNAP are required to issue benefits to all eligible households applying for assistance; however, the program is funded with a fixed amount in the annual Agriculture appropriations bill. In the case actual expenditures exceed appropriated amounts or if a lapse in the federal budget occurs due to a government shutdown, families are at risk of having their SNAP benefits suspended. Given the critical role SNAP plays combating food insecurity and supporting local economies in times of adversity, such an occurrence would be disastrous, yet is easily avoidable.

The risk of a shortfall in SNAP appropriations is particularly high in the next year. With uncertainty on the duration of the current public health emergency, it is impossible to predict the number of states or duration of time that states will continue issuance of SNAP Emergency Allotments. Further, the continued effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and availability of policies to mitigate its economic impacts have resulted in a wide range of possible trends in SNAP participation. With insufficient funds in contingency reserve that also must be made

available to support natural disasters and other emergencies, it is more important than ever that Congress plans for the future in its approach to SNAP appropriations.

Adopting these recommendations would not increase the budget for SNAP nor expand the program in any way. Rather, it would simply align the way SNAP is budgeted with other appropriated entitlements, such as Medicaid, SSI, and Veteran's benefits. As a coalition of membership organizations that represent state and local stakeholders responsible for governance and administration of SNAP, we believe these actions represent common sense solutions that prioritize the resiliency and well-being of our nation.

Should you have any questions or need further information, please contact Matthew Lyons, at mlyons@aphsa.org.

Sincerely,

Tracy Wareing Evans



President and CEO
American Public Human Services Association

Chris Morrill



Executive Director
Government Finance Officers Association

Marc A. Ott



Executive Director and CEO
International City/County Management
Association

Matthew Chase



Executive Director
National Association of Counties

Claudia Tuck



President
National Association of County Human
Services Administrators

Clarence E. Anthony



Executive Director and CEO
National League of Cities

Tom Cochran



Executive Director
The United States Conference of Mayors

cc:

House Committee on Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

Senate Committee on Appropriations

House Agriculture Committee, Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight, and Department Operations

Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry