



California Anti-Hunger Leaders Oppose President's FY 2021 Budget That Would Worsen Poverty, Hunger & Hardship

President Trump's Budget proposes billions of dollars in deep funding cuts that would increase poverty, widen income inequality, and take away basic food assistance for Americans of all ages. Simply put, it would increase Hunger in America. California Association of Food Banks, California Food Policy Advocates, and Western Center on Law and Poverty urge California Congressional Representatives to reject the Administration's proposals to severely cut the necessary assistance provided through SNAP and other vital programs that help lift millions of Californians out of poverty.

The Trump Administration is proposing to cut funding for SNAP by \$180 billion (nearly 30%) over the next 10 years. The budget advances an ill-conceived and widely-ridiculed structural change to the program: giving Americans a stigmatizing monthly box of government-selected foods in lieu of benefits delivered on an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card. The assumption that the government can buy and provide food more efficiently than millions of American households is faulty and unrealistic. The Administration is seeking additional cuts through rule changes that would together cut SNAP benefits for more than 3 million Americans. Together, these proposals would have devastating impacts on California where an estimated 2 million households rely on SNAP. The time limit that already threatens basic food assistance to as many as 700,000 Californians would be extended to adults between 50-65 years old, an especially cruel provision that would spike hunger among older adults.

The Budget's proposed cuts are in addition to the three SNAP benefit cuts that the Administration is seeking through administrative rule making. Our organizations were similarly united against these SNAP rule changes, overseeing tens of thousands of public comments against the rules from across California, the vast majority in opposition. We applaud Attorney General Becerra for joining the legal effort to block the first of these rules and thank the House for filing an amicus brief in support. We urge the courts to stop the Administration's efforts to undermine the will of Congress expressed in the 2018 Farm Bill that explicitly rejected these cuts and was passed with historic, bipartisan support.

Under the Budget proposal, child nutrition programs are also on the chopping block. School meals would see a \$1.7 billion reduction in spending over the next 10 years under the Administration's proposal. Large portions of this cut would come as a result of children losing eligibility for free or reduced-price school meals. The decrease in eligibility would result from changes to the process for verifying school meal applications and a reduction in the number of schools eligible to implement the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). CEP is a critical tool for almost 3,000 of California's high-poverty schools, enabling them to provide breakfast and lunch at no charge to all students. In addition to these cuts, the budget proposes to eliminate funding for the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers, which funds local after-school and summer learning programs at an estimated 1,000 school sites in California alone: the loss in funding would hurt access to after school snacks and suppers served in these programs.

Last, the budget proposes a 10-year, trillion dollar cut to Medicaid, and massive cuts to other critical programs that help meet families' basic needs and prevent harm and pain, including \$20 billion in cuts to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program and cuts to public housing programs. Together these cuts would bring devastating hardship to Californians of all ages, stress already limited budgets, and push many into deeper poverty.

California's anti-hunger community is united in calling on our Members of Congress to reject all of these cuts and instead invest in the programs proven to end hunger and the root cause of poverty.

