



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

September 24, 2019

The Honorable Mike DeWine
Governor, State of Ohio
Hall of States
444 N. Capitol Street, NW, Suite 542
Washington, DC 20001

Governor DeWine,

On behalf of the 1.38 million Ohioans participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)¹, we write in opposition to the proposed rule, *Revision of Categorical Eligibility in SNAP*, published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to roll back Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE). The proposal would impose hardship on approximately 3.1 million Americans who would lose their SNAP benefits,² effectively taking food out of the mouths of an estimated 500,000 children³ and many elderly citizens.

For over a decade, federal law has provided states and territories the flexibility to extend SNAP eligibility to households receiving benefits and services through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant. Currently, 42 states and territories, including Ohio, have opted to use BBCE to provide access to SNAP for TANF recipients – in some cases up to 200 percent of the poverty level.⁴ Restricting the use of BBCE would harm Ohioans already struggling to make ends meet.

According to USDA's Economic Research Service, the prevalence of food insecurity in Ohio (13.7 percent) was higher than the national average (12.3 percent) in 2017.⁵ USDA's proposed rule would take SNAP benefits away from over 61,000 Ohio households.⁶ Additionally, eliminating the flexibility that BBCE provides for Ohio to streamline its SNAP administration means more paperwork burden for both the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and the low-income households they serve. Ohioans deserve better.

¹ United States Department of Agriculture. 2019. *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Number of Person Participating*. <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/29SNAPcurrPP-9.pdf>

² United States Department of Agriculture. 2019. *Revision of Categorical Eligibility in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program*. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/07/24/2019-15670/revision-of-categorical-eligibility-in-the-supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

³ Food Research & Action Center. 2019. *Broad-based Categorical Eligibility and School Meals*. <https://www.frac.org/blog/broad-based-categorical-eligibility-and-school-meals>

⁴ Aussenberg, Randy Alison et al. 2019. *The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): Categorical Eligibility*. Congressional Research Service. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R42054>

⁵ Coleman-Jenson, Alisha et al. 2018. *Household Food Security in the United States in 2017*. United States Department of Agriculture. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/90023/err-256.pdf?v=0>

⁶ Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. 2019. *New Research Analyzes State-Level Impact of USDA Proposal to End SNAP Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility*. <https://www.stateofobesity.org/new-research-analyzes-state-level-impact-of-usda-proposal-to-end-snap-broad-based-categorical-eligibility/>

Congress has consistently rejected similar proposals to roll back BBCE in the past two bipartisan-led Farm Bills. Such a proposal is contrary to the will of Congress and will gravely harm vulnerable Ohio families.

We urge you to preserve the integrity and mission of SNAP for the welfare of Ohioans and reject this Administration's harmful proposal.

Sincerely,




Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



Marcia Fudge
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress



Tim Ryan
Member of Congress