

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Katherine Clark, U.S. House
The Honorable James McGovern, U.S. House
The Honorable Stephen Lynch, U.S. House
The Honorable Jake Auchincloss, U.S. House

The Honorable Edward Markey, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Richard Neal, U.S. House
The Honorable William Keating, U.S. House
The Honorable Ayanna Pressley, U.S. House
The Honorable Seth Moulton, U.S. House

May 16, 2024

Dear Members of the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation:

Thank you for your leadership fighting hunger and poverty in the Commonwealth and nationwide. The below 113 Massachusetts organizations write seeking your strident opposition to House Agriculture Committee Chair Glenn Thompson's proposal to cut SNAP over the next decade. Congressman Thompson's proposal would prevent future science and evidence based adjustments to SNAP benefit amounts. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates this would cut \$30 billion from SNAP over 10 years. This would mean a **\$750 million cut to SNAP for Massachusetts families between FY2027 and FY2033.**¹

In Massachusetts currently **1 in 6 residents - over 1 million people** - use SNAP to help put healthy, nutritious food on the table.² Shelter, living and other basic living expenses outpace income for many Massachusetts households. The proposed SNAP cut will harm older adults, children and adults with severe disabilities and working families.

The House Agriculture Committee proposes to cut \$30B in SNAP over 10 years (starting in FY2027), by eliminating USDA's critical evaluation of the baseline for determining minimally adequate SNAP benefits through a market basket of food called the "Thrifty Food Plan" or TFP. The maximum SNAP benefit amount is based on the *minimum* amount of money USDA estimates a household needs to purchase a frugal but minimally nutritious diet based on the TFP. The TFP is the lowest of USDA's four meal plans and represents the bare minimum a family needs.³

For about 50 years the cost of the TFP was only adjusted for food price inflation but retained antiquated assumptions about nutritious diets. The TFP also assumed that families would spend hours each day preparing meals, such as hand-soaking and boiling dried beans rather than buying

¹ "Chair Thompson's Plan Would Cut SNAP Benefits and Ignore Scientific Evidence in Thrifty Food Plan Updates.: The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, April 18, 2024. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/chair-thompsons-plan-would-cut-snap-benefits-and-ignore-scientific>

² MA Department of Transitional Assistance Performance Scorecard. <https://www.mass.gov/lists/dta-performance-scorecards>

³ The TFP is the lowest of USDA's four meal plans. The other plans are used to set more realistic food budgets in bankruptcy court, alimony, child support, and the food allowance for military service members. See USDA Food Plans, updated as of March 2024. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cnpp/usda-food-plans>

canned beans. Indeed, most Americans work long hours, commute to school or work, and must be able to buy foods that support quickly putting healthy meals on the table for their households.

In 2018, Congress passed a bipartisan Farm Bill which directed USDA to take into account factors other than inflation and to re-evaluate the TFP. In 2021 USDA did a thorough, scientific evidence-based review of the underlying food costs. USDA issued a revised TFP for Fiscal Year 2022 resulting in an average increase **of \$1.40 per person, per day**. This was a modest but critical, and long overdue, adjustment to SNAP's purchasing power - lifting more than 1 million children above the poverty line. Scientists, nutritionists, and policy experts must be able to continue reevaluating the TFP in the future, so that SNAP can continue to reflect the reality of the world around us.

The 113 Massachusetts organizations below represent a range of community groups, health care providers, social workers, legal aid, and emergency food providers. For every meal provided by an emergency food provider, SNAP provides 9.⁴ Despite the incredible support network in Massachusetts, we know any cut to SNAP will lead to longer lines and more families going hungry.

We are united in our opposition to cuts to SNAP. We urge you to strongly speak out against this proposal from the House Agriculture Committee.

Sincerely,

Statewide Organizations

Children's HealthWatch	Massachusetts Councils on Aging
Community Servings	Massachusetts Food System Collaborative
Disability Law Center	Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Disability Policy Consortium	Massachusetts Public Health Association
EMPath (Economic Mobility Pathways)	MLPB
End Hunger New England	Morrissey Market
Equitable Spaces	New England Rural Health Association
Home Care Aide Council	NFI Family Resource Center
Just Roots	One Family
Project Bread	Pocasset Pokanoket Land Trust
Mass Farmers Markets	Point32Health Foundation
Mass General Brigham	Reflection Films
Massachusetts Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs	Spoonfuls
	Tides for Reproductive Freedom

Western MA Organizations

Elizabeth Freeman Center, Inc.	Grow Food Northampton
Food Bank of Western Massachusetts	Stavros CIL
Franklin County Community Meals Program	

⁴ Feeding America SNAP Fast Facts, <https://feedingamericaaction.org/learn/issue-areas/snap/>

Central MA Organizations

AIDS Project Worcester	Regional Environmental Council (REC)
Central West Justice Center	Ruth's Harvest Food Pantry
Charlton Chip In Food Pantry	South Worcester Neighborhood Center
Community Harvest Project	St. Anthony's Food Pantry
El Buen Samaritano Food Program Inc	St. John Paul II Food Pantry
Ginny's Helping Hand, Inc.	Stone Soup Kitchen
Highland Baptist Church Food Pantry	The Mustard Seed Catholic Worker
Jeremiah's Inn	Community, Inc.
MetroWest Food Collaborative	The Salvation Army of Milford, MA
Daily Bread Food Pantry, Inc.	United Parishes of Southborough Food Pantry
Metrowest Legal Services	Water Source Food Pantry (Fuente de Agua)
Montachusett Veterans Outreach Food Pantry	Worcester Community Action Council
Pernet Family Health Service	Worcester County Food Bank
Quinsigamond Village Community Center	Worcester Food Policy Council

Eastern MA Organizations

Allston Brighton Health Collaborative	Metropolitan Area Planning Council
All Saints Parish Brookline	Mill City Grows
Boston Medical Center	M.O.L.I.F.E., Inc.
Bread of Life	Neighbors In Need
Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee (CEOC)	Northeast Justice Center
Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fall River	Oakdale Farms - Lane Gardens
CEDC	Operation Nourish
Citizens Inn	Our Neighbor's Table
Citizens for Citizens	Project Kompass
Coalition for a Better Acre	Jewish Family & Children's Service of Greater Boston
Daily Table	RCN- Food Pantry Peabody
Eastie Farm	Rosie's Place
East Boston Neighborhood Health Center	Saint Vincent DePaul Pantry at St Charles
East Boston Social Centers	St. Francis House
Emmaus Inc	St. Paul's Soup Kitchen, Inc
First Church Stoneham Food Pantry	Sustainable CAPE - Center for Agricultural Preservation & Education
Food For Free	Temple Sinai of Sharon
Food Link	The Boston Foundation
Fresh Truck	The Greater Boston Food Bank
Greater Boston Legal Services	The Marion Institute, Inc.
Housing Families	The Open Door
Immigrant Service Providers Group/Health	Three Sisters Garden Project
Inside the Sun	Vital CxNs
La Colaborativa	YMCA Southcoast
Lowell COA & Senior Center	YWCA Cambridge
Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition	YMCA of Greater Boston
Merrimack Valley Food Bank	
Merrimack Valley YMCA	