

# AFL-CIO

## LEGISLATIVE ALERT

May 20, 2024

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 12.5 million workers and 60 affiliate unions represented by the AFL-CIO, I urge you to oppose the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024 when it comes to a vote in the House Agriculture Committee, and to reject any amendments that further harm our nation's food programs.

This partisan bill proposes changes to the Thrifty Food Program, resulting in close to \$30 billion in cuts to SNAP and other food benefits over the next decade, worsening food insecurity and hunger for over 42 million Americans. According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, these cuts will affect 17 million children, 5 million children under age five, 6 million seniors, and 4 million people with disabilities. Among other things, according to this analysis, the bill will result in \$500 million less funding for the Summer EBT program, depriving families of food benefits during the summer recess when school lunches are unavailable. Enacting this bill without dramatic changes would push more people below the poverty line and increase child hunger.

Additionally, we strongly oppose provisions like those in H.R. 5094, which strip the USDA of its oversight authority and eliminate federal protections for merit staffing within SNAP, potentially setting a dangerous precedent for other federal programs. Merit staff are essential for conducting SNAP eligibility screenings and maintaining program integrity. Privatization, as evident in failed experiments in Texas and Indiana, wastes taxpayer dollars and harms program beneficiaries.

Our unions represent workers across the entire food supply chain—from meat-cutting floors and school cafeterias to grocery store checkouts and agricultural fields. These workers are essential to our economy and community well-being. It is imperative that the Farm Bill supports good jobs and includes the voices of food workers in agricultural policy decisions.

We urge Congress to back agricultural policies that foster well-paying jobs, including the bipartisan Senate Farm Bill, the Rural Prosperity and Food Security Act of 2024, which seeks to protect and expand SNAP benefits, improving access for marginalized groups and offering a more effective approach to combating hunger and supporting workers.

Food safety, nutrition, and agricultural policies are vital to all Americans, especially our union members. We urge you to vote against this partisan Farm Bill and any further damaging amendments, and instead, work towards a more inclusive and effective solution.

Sincerely,



Jody Calemine  
Director, Government Affairs