

NACo ANALYSIS OF HOUSE & SENATE FARM BILLS

Provisions Addressing the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)



Introduction: SNAP and Counties

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a public assistance program that offers nutrition support to eligible low-income individuals and families. The program currently serves approximately 42 million residents across the nation and accounts for 80 percent of spending in the omnibus food and agriculture legislation known as the farm bill.

Although SNAP is primarily a partnership between the federal government and states, ten states delegate SNAP administration directly to county agencies: California, Colorado, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Virginia and Wisconsin. Counties in these ten states contribute significant local funds to the administrative and supplemental costs of running the program. In 2016, \$63 billion in SNAP funding was administered by these counties, covering services for 31 percent of all SNAP recipients.

The county role in administering SNAP is one of the many ways in which counties serve as the front-line social safety-net for our nation's communities. Counties operate healthy eating, school nutrition and senior nutrition programs across the country. In every county, SNAP is an important aspect for healthy eating, especially in areas lacking access to sustainable and fresh food supplies.

SNAP in the 2018 Farm Bill Reauthorization

The farm bill is reauthorized every five years, and its current authorization is set to expire in September 2018. Over the last several months, the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate have developed and passed their respective reauthorization bills, which contain key provisions affecting SNAP.

On June 21, the House passed the Agriculture & Nutrition Act ([H.R. 2](#)) by a party-line vote of 213-211. The House legislation contains several proposals of concern to counties including limiting SNAP program eligibility, implementing stricter work requirements for SNAP recipients and expanding work training programs.

On June 28, the Senate passed the bipartisan Agriculture Improvement Act ([S. 3042](#)) by a vote of 86-11. The bill proposes reforms to SNAP, including improvements to program effectiveness and workforce training pilot programs. In contrast to the House bill, the Senate's bill does not include major changes to SNAP program eligibility or work requirements for SNAP recipients. On June 21, NACo sent a [letter to Senate leadership](#) supporting their development of a bipartisan farm bill.

Current State-of-Play

With both chambers having passed their respective reauthorization bills, House and Senate legislators must now reconcile the differences between their measures in a conference committee before a final version can be sent to the president for his signature. The following chart explains the differences between the two chambers' reauthorization bills as they relate to SNAP and the potential impacts these provisions may have on counties.

Comparison of House & Senate Versions of the 2018 Farm Bill

Provisions Addressing the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Provision	Current Law	House Bill (H.R. 2)	Senate Bill (S. 3042)	NACo Policy
Funding	Provides \$70.6 billion each year in mandatory funding for SNAP	Would cut SNAP by more than \$20 billion over ten years by eliminating broad-based categorical eligibility (\$5 billion), reducing benefits for non-elderly SNAP households (\$5.3 billion) and expanding the program's work requirements (\$9.2 billion)	The bill would provide \$70.6 billion each year in mandatory funding for SNAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NACo supports full funding for all farm bill titles, including the nutrition title, which ensures counties can help low-income residents access healthy food
Work requirements	<p>General work requirements: Adults ages 18-49 who are not pregnant, disabled or otherwise exempt are required to work at least part-time or agree to take a job if it is offered to them</p> <p>ABAWD work requirements: Work requirements apply to unemployed, childless adults ages 18-49, also known as able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs), who lose benefits if they are unable to find a job within three months of becoming eligible for SNAP benefits</p>	<p>General work requirements: Bill would establish a unified work requirement across SNAP in the form of a single work standard for all nondisabled adults ages 18-59, requiring them to hold at least a part-time job within one month of receiving SNAP benefits</p> <p>ABAWD work requirement: Bill would require ABAWDs between the ages of 18-59 to work or be enrolled in a job-training program for at least 20 hours a week beginning in FY 2021; in FY 2026 this would increase to 25 hours a week</p>	The bill would maintain work requirements for SNAP recipients under current 2014 Farm Bill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NACo opposes arbitrary and counterproductive work requirements and supports a strong county role in mutually negotiated outcome measures in which states are judged by their progress toward achieving agreed upon goals NACo supports great flexibility in the SNAP work requirements that allow counties to meet the individual needs of their caseloads Stricter work requirements could increase administrative burdens on counties in states where SNAP is county-administered
Eligibility	<p>General eligibility: Households receiving certain amount of government assistance, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI), are automatically eligible for SNAP</p> <p>Categorical eligibility: States can implement "broad-based" categorical eligibility to make people eligible for SNAP with income levels above 130 percent of the poverty line</p>	<p>General eligibility: Would eliminate SSI participation and certain types of TANF participation as a consideration for categorical eligibility. Categorical eligibility would be given to those recipients receiving TANF cash assistance or are receiving non-cash TANF supports such as transportation or child care if they are at 130 percent of the poverty line or below</p> <p>Categorical eligibility: Would eliminate "broad-based" categorical eligibility</p>	The bill would maintain program eligibility under current 2014 Farm Bill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NACo encourages Congress to increase the options available to state and local administrative bodies in streamlining applications and administrative processes (specifically for SSI participants) With county agencies already overwhelmed due to limited resources, barriers to entry for participants should be reduced. Congress and states should not make the most restrictive elements of each program the qualifications required for approval

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Provision	Current Law	House Bill (H.R. 2)	Senate Bill (S. 3042)	NACo Policy
SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T)	<p>The 2014 Farm Bill implemented pilot projects to test innovative strategies, including enhancing E&T reporting and monitoring requirements. The bill provides \$90 million in funding for E&T. These pilot programs required additional reporting measures</p> <p>States are required to administer a SNAP E&T program. However, only a small percentage of SNAP recipients participate in these programs</p> <p>There are two categories of SNAP E&T participation – mandatory participants and voluntary participants. States have significant discretion in determining who may be served through E&T programs, including whether to make E&T participation mandatory for any participants</p>	<p>The bill would budget \$1 billion per year, after a two-year phase-in period, to fund the expansion for SNAP E&T</p> <p>The new proposal also mandates that unemployed, working-age SNAP recipients enroll into these programs, and that states are required to provide a training slot for all SNAP recipients subject to the work requirement</p>	<p>The bill would provide additional funding for and allow additional states to participate in SNAP E&T pilot programs (implemented in the 2014 Farm Bill), which would create more opportunities to gather data on best practices around helping SNAP participants obtain and maintain employment. Specifically, the bill calls for an additional \$185 million to conduct SNAP E&T pilot projects that target individuals 50 years of age or older, formerly incarcerated individuals or individuals in a substance abuse treatment program</p> <p>The bill additionally proposes increased collaboration between state SNAP agencies and state and local workforce development boards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NACo supports enabling individuals to find and secure long-term employment and encourages Congress to provide adequate funding for a wide range of support services. • SNAP E&T should receive additional funding from the federal government to ensure that states and counties have the proper resources to assist individuals in finding work and remaining employed • NACo supports further integration of SNAP E&T with existing workforce programs at the federal, state and local level, including local workforce development boards

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