

Farm Bill/SNAP Sample letter

Date

The Honorable _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative _____:

I write on behalf of _____, in opposition to the proposed \$40 billion in cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) the House is expected to consider. We urge you to **VOTE NO** on any Farm Bill proposal that includes \$40 billion in cuts to SNAP.

Last year, the Census Bureau found that nearly 50 million Americans, more than 16 percent of the population, lived in poverty in 2011 and accounted for an additional 700 thousand more people struggling to survive than the year before. Moreover, the findings showed that almost 20 percent of American children continued to live in poverty. New Census Bureau data on poverty, income, employment and housing for 2012 will be released in days and will again encapsulate the incredible privations that imperil tens of millions of people.

To this point, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) provided disturbing clarity on the plight of unemployed Americans. According to the latest BLS statistics, the nation experienced the steepest retraction in the workforce in 35 years – and this retraction and not job growth was responsible for the recent deceptive improvements in the unemployment rate. According to BLS, only 63.2 percent of working-age Americans had jobs or were looking for work as of August 2013. The remaining 36.8 percent, or 90 million people of working age, were not included in the labor force.

The USDA recently reported that in 2012, 14.5 percent of U.S. households were food insecure, meaning they lacked access to adequate food for all family members at some point during the year. The SNAP program reduces food insecurity by increasing access to nutritious food.

Current eligibility levels for the SNAP program closely align with poverty and unemployment. It is predicted that should the proposed \$40 billion in cuts to the SNAP program go forward, 4-6 million people could lose benefits. This would constitute untenable trauma to millions of Americans and their families, who were dislocated and downsized by the 2007-2009 Recession and are struggling to survive through the anemic economic recovery.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to oppose the proposed House cuts to the SNAP program and to instead work with the Senate to enable the poorest of Americans to maintain access to the SNAP program.

Sincerely,