

## Advocacy Update 06.17.2021



NTFB VOICE

# Advocacy Update

ADVOCATING FOR A HUNGER-FREE, HEALTHY NORTH TEXAS

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### In Brief -

- Simplified SNAP application is now law for seniors & persons with disabilities
- Biden's Build Back Better Billions
- Child Nutrition Reauthorization Marker Bills

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### SB 224 Signed into Law Yesterday

*Relating to simplified certification and recertification requirements for certain persons under the supplemental nutrition assistance program was signed by the Governor yesterday!*

Beginning 9/1/2021 three items will benefit seniors 60 & older and also persons with disabilities, that have no earned income

1. The use of a shortened SNAP application form
2. Have a 36-month eligibility period, instead of 12-months and allows the individual to skip recertification interviews
3. Allow Texas Health & Human Services Commission to contact individuals receiving Medicaid, to let them know they are eligible for SNAP

Having this bill signed into law is a reason to celebrate you and all the folks who have been working on this bill for at least the past four years. Because of your work, Texans who were already eligible for SNAP, will now have easier access to the program.

### Build Back Better

Last week the US Department of Agriculture announced that it will invest over \$4 billion dollars to strengthen food supply chains in the United States. A Task Force was created, Supply Chain Disruptions Task Force, with USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack as co-chair. The initiative seeks to strengthen the food systems, support food production, improve processing, invest in distribution and aggregation of foods, and increase market opportunities.

“The COVID-19 pandemic led to massive disruption for growers and food workers. It exposed a food system that was rigid, consolidated, and fragile. Meanwhile, those growing, processing and preparing our food are earning less each year in a system that rewards size over all else,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “The Build Back Better initiative will make meaningful investments to build a food system that is more resilient against shocks, delivers greater value to growers and workers, and offers consumers an affordable selection of healthy food produced and sourced locally and regionally by farmers and processors from diverse backgrounds.

This announcement came alongside the other announcement that the USDA-Agricultural Marketing Service will infuse another \$1 billion into the emergency food network by purchasing healthy foods and build food bank/food pantry capacities.

The funding for the \$5 billion announced comes from both the American Rescue Plan Act and the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021.

### **Child Nutrition Reauthorization Bills**

As we switch our focus from the Texas State Legislature to the Federal Government, we see the Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR) entering the frame once again. As a reminder, the CNR is a collection of bills that impact the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Summer Meals, School Meals, the Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP), Farm to School Program, and Nutrition Education (and even a few more).

Multiple bills have been filed to demonstrate the desire to open the official Reauthorization process, that has not been changed since 2010 (it's supposed to be reauthorized every 4 years).

Let this serve as an announcement and reintroduction as we begin this long, difficult but rewarding process of making nutrition stronger for our children.

**STAY TUNED:** We are going to need a lot of help when the official reauthorization process kicks off!

Examples of marker bills filed

Wise Investment in Children Act (WIC Act) ([S.853](#) / [H.R.2011](#))

The bill would:

- extend postpartum women’s eligibility to two years;
- extend child eligibility to age six or the beginning of kindergarten; and
- extend infant certifications to two years.

The Stop Child Hunger Act of 2021 ([S. 1831](#) / [H.R. 3519](#))

The bill would:

- convert the Summer EBT pilot into a permanent, nationwide program.
- authorize EBT cards for eligible households with a balance worth the daily value of school lunch and breakfast to cover school closures of more than five days, including summer and winter school breaks and unanticipated school closures.
- allow eligible households to use EBT cards for the purchase of food only from retail food stores that have been approved for participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- provide grants to states to support the development of data systems or upgrades to existing data systems to carry out this program.

Summer Meals Act ([S. 1170](#) / [H.R. 783](#))

The bill would:

- improve the area eligibility test to allow communities to participate if 40 percent of the children are eligible for free or reduced-price meals
- allow local government agencies and private nonprofit organizations to feed children year-round through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)
- provide funding for transportation grants to fund innovative approaches and mobile meal trucks
- allow all sites to serve a third meal
- S. 1170 includes an additional provision to support meal service in disaster situations

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Questions or Comments?

[Watch our energy consumption LIVE here](#)

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