



North Texas Food Bank 2022 Federal Legislative Agenda

Farm Bill 2023 Priorities: Protect and Strengthen SNAP, TEFAP, and Other Anti-Hunger Programs

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as “food stamps”)

- Congress should protect SNAP’s structure and funding and strengthen SNAP by adopting the provisions contained in the following bills:
 - **H.R. 4077/ S. 2192 (Closing the Meal Gap Act of 2021)**
 - Base SNAP benefit allotments on the more adequate Low-Cost Food Plan.
 - Boost the SNAP minimum monthly benefit which currently is only \$20.
 - **H.R. 1919/ S. 2515 (Enhance Access to SNAP Act of 2021)**
 - Level SNAP access for low-income college students.
 - **H.R. 5227 (Lift the Bar Act of 2021)**
 - Align federal assistance programs with the eligibility standards of the Affordable Care Act, allowing all lawfully present immigrants to access federal programs without discriminatory bars or waiting periods.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

- TEFAP is a means-tested federal program that provides food commodities at no cost to individuals and families in need of short-term hunger relief through organizations, such as food banks, pantries, soup kitchens, and emergency shelters.
 - TEFAP accounts for approximately 1/3 of the food that NTFB distributes.
- **TEFAP Actions for 2023 Farm Bill**
 - Increase TEFAP food purchases to \$450 million (from \$400 million)
 - TEFAP Storage and Distribution Funds should increase to \$200 million per year (from \$100 million).
 - TEFAP Infrastructure Grants should remain at \$15 million per year.

Support Policies to Enable Easier Food Donation

- Remove the state match within the TEFAP Farm to Food Bank program.
- Standardize food donation guidelines to allow the donation of safe wholesome food regardless of the “sell-by” date.
- Support innovative food rescue programs that help offset the cost to harvest, pack, and transport rescued food.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

- Maintain current level of CSFP funding (\$375 million).
- CSFP provides nutritious food boxes to thousands of seniors aged 60 years and above each month.





Child Nutrition Reauthorization

Out-of-School Time Programs

- Bill should make the following investments:
 - Increase the reach of, and the benefits provided through, the summer meals programs.
 - Improve area eligibility requirements so that more communities are able to provide summer and afterschool meals.
 - Build upon the success of the Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) program, and provide Summer EBT benefit to children who are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals when schools are closed.
 - Provide the opportunity to reach children through alternative delivery models that proved to be critical during the pandemic.

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP)

- Increase the number of children eligible for meals at no charge, and allow more schools to offer nutritious, meals to all students at no charge:
 - Expand community eligibility.
 - Create additional opportunities to directly certify children living in low-income households for free school meals; for example, allow children who have been impacted by the opioid and drug crisis to receive school meals at no charge.
 - Take steps to ensure that the school cafeteria is a positive environment for all students, and to reduce the accumulation of unpaid school meals debt.

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

- Recommendations to increase WIC access:
 - Extend certification periods to two years for infants and postpartum women, and enrollment for children until their sixth birthday.
 - Make permanent the flexibilities that allow for remote enrollment, services, and benefit issuance, and facilitating online ordering.
 - Expand WIC research in underserved communities and maintain the scientific integrity of the WIC food package process.



FY 2023 Budget and Appropriations Priorities

SNAP

- **Strengthen SNAP** by basing benefit allotments on Low-Cost Food Plan, removing the cap on the shelter deduction, and increasing the minimum benefit level.
- **Promote equity** by improving SNAP access for college students and families working their way up the economic ladder.
- **Provide funds** necessary to ensure continuity of SNAP operations and benefits and ensure SNAP can operate in October 2022.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

- **TEFAP Commodities:** Provide \$400 million for TEFAP food purchases as authorized by the 2018 Farm Bill to provide emergency food assistance to people in need.
- **TEFAP Storage and Distribution and Infrastructure Funds:** Provide full funding for the TEFAP storage and distribution account (\$100 million) and the TEFAP Infrastructure Grants program (\$15 million).

Child Nutrition Programs

- **School Meals:**
 - Preserve the improvements made in school meals access, nutrition standards, and the overall school nutrition environment.
 - Congress should provide \$10 million for school meals direct certification grants to reduce paperwork for schools and \$100 million in school equipment grants to enable school districts to build their capacity to prepare healthier and more cost-efficient meals.
- **Summer Meals:**
 - Provide \$100 million to continue the current and expanded Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) Demonstration Projects to ensure that children in rural and underserved areas have access to nutrition during the summer.
- **Team Nutrition:**
 - Provide \$25 million for Team Nutrition funding, the primary resource for promoting healthy eating and nutrition education in child nutrition programs.
- **WIC:**
 - Fund WIC at \$6.3 billion to serve anticipated caseloads while accounting for the rising costs of delivering high-quality nutrition services.
- **21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC):**
 - Provide \$2.5 billion for the program, which is the largest source of funding for afterschool and summer programs.