

SB 273 / HB 1287

UPDATE THE SNAP

VEHICLE ASSET TEST



BACKGROUND

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is our nation's first line of defense against hunger. Eligibility for SNAP is primarily based on income and family size. Texas also chooses to use a Vehicle Asset Test, which places a limit on the value of the vehicles that a household may own and still qualify for the program.

PROBLEM

The SNAP Vehicle Asset Test prevents many hungry families from accessing temporary food assistance, for several reasons:



1. It is outdated.

The \$15,000 limit for the value of a family's first vehicle was last updated in 2001, and the \$4,650 limit on any subsequent vehicles hasn't been changed since 1973.

2. It disproportionately harms two-parent households.

The extremely low limit on a family's second vehicle disqualifies many two-parent and multigenerational households from accessing SNAP.



3. It jeopardizes people's ability to work.

In Texas, able-bodied adults are required to work 30 hours per week or they can lose their SNAP benefits. But the Vehicle Asset Test prevents people from qualifying for SNAP and owning a reliable vehicle.

4. It harms families when inflation is high.

Inflation has recently caused thousands of Texas families to lose their SNAP benefits at recertification. These families' cars, which were previously below the limit, have now risen in value so much that their food assistance has been taken from them.



SOLUTION

Texas must modernize the SNAP Vehicle Asset Test by applying an inflationary adjustment to the current limits. No family should be denied help simply because they own a reliable vehicle, and no family should lose their ability to put food on the table because of inflation in the car market.



Supported by the Texas Food Policy Roundtable

