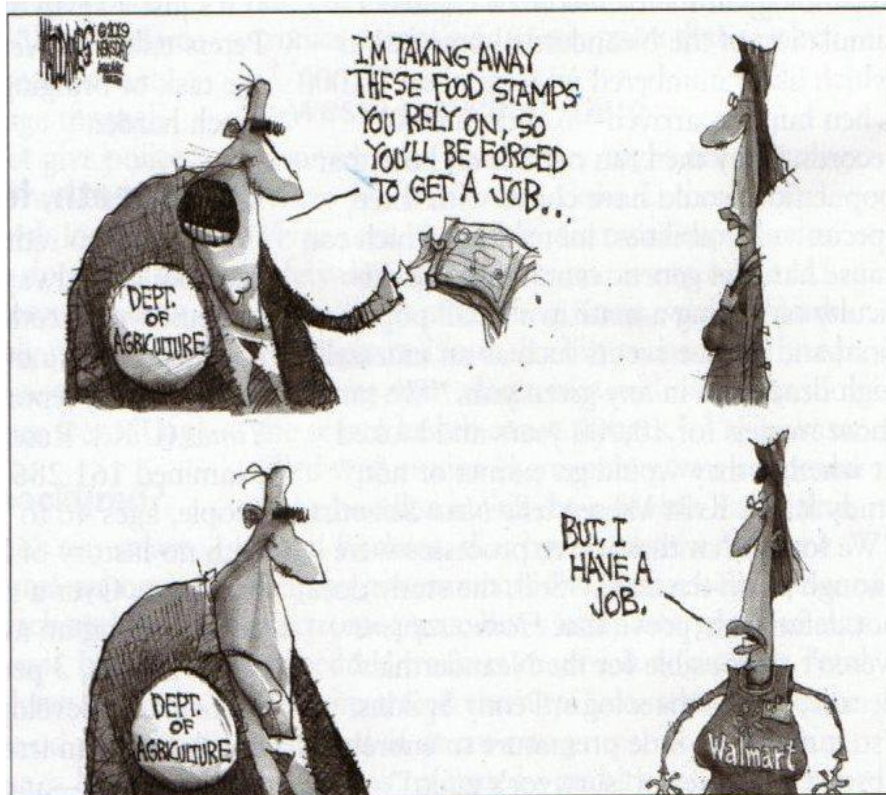


Justice Jottings

Who uses food stamps?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) is the nation's most important anti-hunger program. In Fiscal Year 2017, SNAP reached:

- **1,843,000** Pennsylvania residents, or **14%** of the state population (**1 in 7**)
- **42,000,000** participants in the United States, or **13%** of the total population (**1 in 8**)



Nationally, more than **68%** of SNAP participants are in families with children, almost **33%** are in families with members who are elderly or have disabilities, and more than **44%** are in working families. The statistics for Pennsylvania are 62%, 47% and 44% respectively.

<https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/a-closer-look-at-who-benefits-from-snap-state-by-state-fact-sheets#Pennsylvania>

SNAP is one of the most effective federal programs that we have. SNAP lifted 3.2 million Americans out of poverty in 2018, according to the Census Bureau's Supplemental Poverty Measure, and is nearly as effective as the Earned Income Tax Credit in lifting families above the poverty line. <https://www.frac.org/wp-content/uploads/frac-facts-snap-strengths.pdf>

(Cartoon: Matt Davies, December 5, 2019 Newsday: "Get a job: Federal – Aid Federal – Funding Food – Stamps Walmart <https://projects.newsday.com/cartoons/opinion/matt-davies-political-cartoons/#!/>)

The New Food Economy reported that, in 2017, nearly one in three Amazon employees in Arizona was on food stamps or lived with someone who was — meaning 1,800 people.

In Pennsylvania, one in 10 Amazon employees was on food stamps, or more than 1,000 people. <https://www.businessinsider.com/amazon-employees-on-food-stamps-2018-8>

Deborah Weinstein, Executive Director of the Coalition on Human Needs, issued the following statement in response to the Trump Administration's announcement that it plans to cut SNAP benefits for hundreds of thousands of Americans:

"Taking food away from very poor people does not promote work. It simply compounds their hardships. The Trump Administration today ignored the will of Congress, the judgment of states, more than 100,000 concerned comments, and its own estimate of the harmful impact on close to 700,000 people. It will time-limit food assistance to only three months every three years if people are unable to get steady part-time work. People now receiving very modest SNAP benefits (averaging a little over \$160 per month) will lose this assistance, despite having incomes of less than \$2,200 a year, according to **Feeding America**. Many states have waived that harsh limit because they judged there were insufficient jobs available to this impoverished group. The Trump Administration has decided to insist that states impose the time limit in most areas.

"The final rule pays no attention to the fact that close to two-thirds of the individuals now threatened with loss of assistance have either worked but not enough steady hours, have health problems but have not qualified for disability aid, or are providing care to someone not officially a dependent. Nor does it recognize that within geographic areas with low overall unemployment, hiring discrimination contributes to far higher unemployment rates among African Americans. The rule provides no funding for job training or other work supports. It will just take away nearly \$5.5 billion in food from very poor people over the next 5 years."

<https://www.chn.org/voices/chn-taking-food-away-from-very-poor-people-does-not-promote-work-it-simply-makes-them-hungrier/>

Tell Sec. of Agriculture Perdue to Reject SNAP Cuts That Would Hurt the Vulnerable

excerpted s.trauss@pachurches.org | <https://www.pachurchesadvocacy.org/usda-reject-snap-cuts-that-hurt-vulnerable/>

The federal administration is trying to bypass Congress—sneaking in billions of dollars in cuts to SNAP through a new proposed rule change by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. **This rule would pull the rug out from under families across the country, cutting SNAP benefits for more than 7 million people, including 3 million children.**

This new effort by the administration would undermine states' ability to account for the costs of utilities as they calculate SNAP benefits. This new proposed USDA rule unfairly standardizes and caps Standard Utility Allowance calculations across the country based on inadequate survey data—resulting in dramatic cuts to food stamps. Some of the cuts could be as much as \$110 a month! To a family having difficulty making ends meet, such a cut will cause impossible choices: feed your children, pay for heat, or pay for medical care.

Go to <https://actionnetwork.org/letters/submit-your-comment-tell-trumps-usda-dont-cut-snap> to tell the USDA to reject cuts to SNAP benefits that would hurt millions of people: children, seniors, people with disabilities and working families.