

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 15, 2012

The Honorable Kevin W. Concannon
Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Jamie L. Whitten Federal Building
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Under Secretary Concannon:

The purpose of this letter is to request your immediate assistance in preventing reduced Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit levels for Ohioans starting in January 2013.

It was recently reported that SNAP benefit levels, for participating Ohio households, will soon see a decrease of approximately \$50 every month because of annual adjustments in standard utility expenses. We are greatly concerned about the ramifications of cutting SNAP benefits to low-income Ohioans.

Cutting food assistance will likely force Ohioans to seek help at our already overburdened food banks. In addition, we are concerned about the economic impacts of reducing the food purchasing power of Ohio's 1.7 million SNAP participants.

We understand that states have significant flexibility developing the methodology used to calculate standard utility expenses. Therefore, we urge the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to continue to work with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to explore all options and utilize all applicable discretionary authority to help prevent unwarranted cuts to Ohioans participating in SNAP.

Enclosed please find a letter we sent to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services urging them to work with USDA to address this situation.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to working with you to resolve this issue as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Marcia L. Fudge
Member of Congress



Tim Ryan
Member of Congress



Betty Sutton
Member of Congress



Steven C. LaTourette
Member of Congress



Dennis J. Kucinich
Member of Congress

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Mr. Michael B. Colbert
Director
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
30 E. Broad Street, 32nd Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Director Colbert:

The purpose of this letter is to request your immediate assistance in preventing reduced Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit levels for Ohioans starting in January 2013.

It was recently reported that SNAP benefit levels, for participating Ohio households, will soon see a decrease of approximately \$50 every month because of annual adjustments in standard utility expenses. We are greatly concerned about the ramifications of cutting SNAP benefits to low-income Ohioans.

Cutting food assistance will likely force Ohioans to seek help at our already overburdened food banks. In addition, we are concerned about the economic impacts of reducing the food purchasing power of Ohio's 1.7 million SNAP participants.

We understand that states have significant flexibility developing the methodology used to calculate standard utility expenses. We have contacted the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regarding this matter. It is our understanding that other Midwestern states have used methodologies that will not result in reductions in SNAP benefit levels of the magnitude projected in Ohio.

Consequently, we urge the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to re-engage with USDA to develop a new methodology or find an alternative solution to prevent unnecessary and severe cuts to the SNAP benefits on which many of Ohio's most vulnerable depend. Enclosed please find a similar letter we sent to USDA urging them to use every available authority to help prevent SNAP cuts for Ohioans.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to working with you to resolve this issue as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



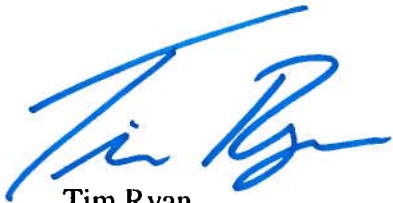
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