

FARM BILL & SNAP: WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

OVERVIEW

The House Agriculture Committee recently released their Farm Bill. The Farm Bill is the law that governs the SNAP program. The Agriculture Committees in the House and Senate are responsible for writing the bill. The House Agriculture Committee recently made their proposed Farm Bill public.

WHAT'S IN THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE'S BILL



Work Requirements: A SNAP recipient could lose their SNAP benefits if they are not working or in a training program for at least 20 hours a week. This work requirement would affect anyone age 18-59 who is able to work and whose children are older than 6 years.



Reduces Eligibility: In Pennsylvania, for example, a mom with 2 kids making over \$26,556 a year would lose their SNAP benefits, compared to over \$33,248 currently. This is because a part of the Farm Bill known as “categorical eligibility” – which allows states to set their own SNAP eligibility levels – would be ended. Without categorical eligibility, the income limit for SNAP eligibility would be lower than it is now.



Reduces Benefit Amount: In many states, families can get higher SNAP benefits if they participate in LIHEAP. This link, known as the Heat and Eat provision, gives families who struggle to pay for heat more funds for food. The Farm Bill being proposed ends this link, meaning lower SNAP benefits for people with high heat and electricity costs.

THE PROCESS

The Farm Bill is not final yet. There are several steps that will need to be taken before any Farm Bill becomes law. This means there will be a need to educate members of Congress about each proposal at each stage.

- 1. House Agriculture Committee makes changes and votes.** First, members of the House Agriculture Committee meet to “mark-up” the bill. This happened on Wednesday, April 18th. At the “mark-up” meeting, committee members can offer amendments or changes to the bill. Members will vote on each amendment and then on the final bill.
- 2. Full House of Representatives votes.** Once the bill has a majority of votes from the Agriculture Committee, it will go to the House floor to be voted on by the entire House of Representatives.
- 3. The Senate Agriculture Committee and full Senate repeat this process.** Once the House of Representatives has voted and approved its version of the Farm Bill, the Senate will go through the same process. First, the Senate Agriculture Committee will mark-up and vote on the bill, and then the full Senate will have a floor vote.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Tell us how these changes would affect you and your family
- Reach out to your members of Congress and share your thoughts
- Write an op-ed about the impact of these changes
- Write a blog post for the Witnesses to Hunger website
- Tell your neighbors, community, friends, and family about this bill