

**SENATE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. 127**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED AUGUST 13, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator LINDA R. GREENSTEIN

District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

Senator NELLIE POU

District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Condemns Trump Administration's proposed rule limiting categorical eligibility for SNAP.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 8/27/2020)

1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** condemning the Trump
2 Administration’s proposed rule limiting categorical eligibility for
3 the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
4
5 **WHEREAS**, The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or
6 SNAP, provides nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget of
7 low-income families in order to purchase healthy food and move
8 towards self-sufficiency; and
9 **WHEREAS**, This nationwide program is federally regulated by the
10 United States Department of Agriculture pursuant to the “Food and
11 Nutrition Act of 2008,” Pub.L.110-246 (7 U.S.C. s.2011 et seq.);
12 and
13 **WHEREAS**, The federal law authorizing SNAP establishes specific
14 income and asset tests for determining benefit eligibility, and
15 permits states to grant “categorical eligibility” for SNAP benefits to
16 individuals who have already been certified for similar means-
17 tested programs, such as the Temporary Assistance for Needy
18 Families (TANF) program; and
19 **WHEREAS**, The Trump Administration has proposed limiting
20 categorical eligibility for SNAP to individuals who qualify for
21 TANF-funded cash benefits of at least \$50 per month for a
22 minimum of six months, and “substantial” non-cash TANF
23 benefits, such as subsidized employment, work supports, or
24 childcare; and
25 **WHEREAS**, The New Jersey Department of Human Services estimates
26 that as many as 68,000 New Jersey residents, or nine percent of
27 SNAP recipients, would lose SNAP benefits under the Trump
28 Administration’s proposal; and
29 **WHEREAS**, Of the 68,000 SNAP recipients who would likely lose their
30 benefits under the Administration’s proposal, 26,000 are children
31 under the age of 18 and 15,000 are senior citizens; and
32 **WHEREAS**, The loss of SNAP benefits could hold significant
33 consequences for these New Jersey residents, as studies show that
34 SNAP participants have better overall dietary quality and health
35 status, and fewer hospitalizations, compared with low-income
36 individuals who do not participate in SNAP; and
37 **WHEREAS**, The Trump Administration’s proposed restrictions on
38 SNAP eligibility translate to an annual benefits loss of \$33 million
39 for New Jersey’s most vulnerable citizens; and
40 **WHEREAS**, The Administration’s proposed rule would have a ripple
41 effect throughout the State, potentially impacting other income-
42 based programs, such as the School Lunch and School Breakfast
43 Programs, and the Community Eligibility Program, under which
44 certain school districts in impoverished areas can provide free lunch
45 to all enrolled students; and
46 **WHEREAS**, This proposed rule may potentially reduce the allocation of
47 federal Title I education funding for schools with a high percentage
48 of students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch; and

1 **WHEREAS**, It is in the best interest of the citizens of this State,
2 especially those low-income residents who rely on SNAP for a
3 healthy diet, for the Legislature to condemn the Trump
4 Administration's efforts to restrict categorical eligibility for SNAP
5 benefits; now, therefore,

6
7 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Senate of the State of New Jersey (the
8 General Assembly concurring):
9

10 1. This Legislature condemns the Trump Administration's
11 proposal to restrict categorical eligibility for the Supplemental
12 Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to households that qualify for
13 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)-funded cash
14 benefits of at least \$50 per month for a minimum of six months, and
15 such non-cash TANF benefits as subsidized employment, work
16 supports, or childcare.
17

18 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
19 shall be transferred by the Clerk of the General Assembly or the
20 Secretary of the Senate to the President of the United States, the
21 Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, and to
22 every member of New Jersey's Congressional delegation.
23
24

25 STATEMENT

26

27 This concurrent resolution condemns the Trump
28 Administration's proposal to limit categorical eligibility for the
29 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, to
30 households that qualify for Temporary Assistance for Needy
31 Families (TANF)-funded cash benefits of at least \$50 per month for
32 a minimum of six months. Additionally, the proposal would restrict
33 the types of non-cash TANF benefits that confer categorical
34 eligibility to subsidized employment, work supports, or childcare.

35 SNAP provides nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget
36 of low-income families, individuals, senior citizens, and people
37 with disabilities in order to purchase healthy food and move
38 towards self-sufficiency. While the federal government funds
39 SNAP benefits, it shares the cost of program administration with the
40 states, which operate the program. The federal law authorizing
41 SNAP establishes specific income and asset tests for determining
42 benefit eligibility. However, the law permits states to grant
43 "categorical eligibility" for individuals who have already been
44 certified for similar means-tested programs, such as TANF.

45 The Administration's proposed rule would deny critical food
46 assistance to the State's most vulnerable residents. The New Jersey
47 Department of Human Services estimates that 68,000 residents
48 would lose SNAP benefits under this proposal, including 26,000

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- 1 children aged 18 and under and 15,000 senior citizens. Many of the
- 2 people who would be affected are low-wage workers, such as direct
- 3 care workers, retail cashiers, and teacher assistants.