November 19, 2026

Dear Senator/Representative,

On World Food Day 2026, Pope Leo XIV articulated: "Hunger cannot be considered a statistical anomaly, for it is caused mainly by a lack of political will and collective charity… Regular access to safe, adequate and sufficient food, in keeping with the dignity of every person, is a basic human right. Guaranteeing this right is an obligation of justice…" Considering this, on behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, Catholic Charities USA, the U.S. Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and Catholic Rural Life, we continue to urge Congress to reconsider cuts and restructuring recently made to our nation's premier domestic anti-hunger program.

With passage in July 2025, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (H.R. 1) eliminated over $180 billion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) through 2034, the largest cuts to the program since its inception. It is estimated that SNAP participation has already fallen by more than 5.5 million people since the bill was enacted, including more than 2 million children. Additionally, structural changes to the program, namely the new administrative cost-sharing requirements, are expected to cause another 300,000 people to lose access and 96,000 children to receive reduced aid.

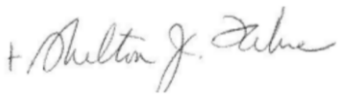
One of the most significant structural changes made to SNAP by H.R. 1 is that states will be expected to pay a greater share of the program's costs. Since the start of FY 2027, states are now required to pay 75 percent of all SNAP administrative costs, an increase from the 50 percent cost-sharing arrangement previously in place. Even more serious, beginning in FY 2028, for the first time in the program's history, states will be required to pay a percentage of SNAP benefit amounts if their error rate – the measurement of whether or not recipients received the correct SNAP benefit amount – is equal to or greater than 6 percent. It must be noted that error rates are not fraud rates, and error rates include both overpayments and underpayments of benefits. Depending on their error rate, the majority of America's states will soon be required to pay 5 percent to 15 percent of SNAP benefit amounts.

Ultimately, SNAP cost-sharing threatens the viability of this vital safety net program. If SNAP cost-sharing were implemented today based on current error rates, it would cost many states hundreds of millions of dollars a year. This is money that states have never had to budget before, forcing them to make difficult tradeoffs such as raising taxes, cutting essential services, reducing SNAP eligibility, or even opting out of the program altogether. As states rush to lower error rates and program costs before the cost shift policies take effect, they risk making hasty decisions such as imposing new barriers to SNAP participation or pulling out of the program altogether if the costs are too high.

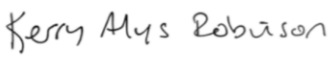
As Catholic organizations committed to upholding human dignity and eliminating hunger, we respectfully request that Congress delay the new state cost-sharing requirements for SNAP benefits by **two years without offsets**. Rushing to implement new SNAP changes could cause people to go hungry through no fault of their own and a two-year delay would give states adequate time to carefully implement changes

and prevent any further disruption to SNAP access. Moreover, any proposed "offset" that increases cost-sharing requirements for states with high error rates in exchange for a delay is counterproductive, potentially placing additional financial strain on states and further jeopardizing access to food assistance. This is a modest request considering the drastic cuts and changes made to SNAP last year, but a critical one nonetheless to mitigate unintended harm to our brothers and sisters who simply need help putting food on the table.

Sincerely,



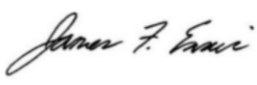
Most Rev. Shelton J. Fabre
Archbishop of Louisville
Chair, Committee on Domestic Justice
and Human Development
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops



Ms. Kerry Alys Robinson
President and CEO
Catholic Charities USA



Mr. John Berry
President
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Mr. James Ennis
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