



# HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

## FARM BILL: NUTRITION

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### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

#### CURRENT:

Insufficient, vague and unenforceable work requirements—further undermined by loopholes to waive individuals from participating—dissuade employment and restrict opportunities for recipients.

- The requirement for Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWDs) has failed to be implemented fairly across states, and where it has been implemented it has failed to incentivize work.
- Employment and Training (E&T) services provided to get individuals back to work and self-sufficiency are inadequate and underfunded.

#### 2018 FARM BILL:

A realistic, supportive and simplified work requirement is paired with funding for states to provide guaranteed, improved and constructive options to move participants toward improved wages, higher-quality employment and independence of government aid. The bill:

- Establishes a substantive work requirement for all work-capable adults (aged 18-59)—thus eliminating both the general work requirement and the ABAWD time limit—with exemptions for specific populations including the elderly, disabled and those who are pregnant;
- Energizes and prepares work-capable adults for self-sufficiency by modernizing the investment in SNAP E&T, providing case management, guaranteeing access for all participants and enhancing the current scope of services offered by states;
- Provides a two-year transition period to states, allowing them to increase their access and capacity in program delivery;
- Does not take away eligibility, but provides individuals options. Individuals may choose not to participate, but they will no longer be eligible for SNAP; and
- Instead, the 2018 Farm Bill provides an effective work requirement of 20 hours per week, coupled with flexible means of delivery, recognizing states know their populations best

### MODERNIZE ASSET TESTING

#### CURRENT:

Current eligibility requirements, particularly asset limitations, are outdated and circumvented too frequently.

- The law provides for program eligibility based on one of two options:
  - Meeting SNAP-specific eligibility requirements, including a limit on the value of household assets; or
  - Automatically – “categorically” - receiving SNAP based on receipt of benefits from specified low-income assistance programs, i.e. TANF. The most egregious form of automatic eligibility is “Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility,” in which states waive asset tests and extend eligibility for SNAP via receipt of—or authorization to receive—a TANF-funded brochure, hotline number, etc., as opposed to actual benefits.



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### MODERNIZE ASSET TESTING (cont.)

#### 2018 FARM BILL:

Enforce asset limits for those not receiving benefits from other income-tested programs and ensure that asset limits are updated to modern levels.

- Eliminate Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility, limiting the use of categorical eligibility to those actually receiving tangible services (e.g. child care or transportation assistance) or cash assistance from TANF.
- Modernize values for assets, many of which have not been updated since the 1970s, and require they be enforced.
  - Allowable asset levels:
    - For households without an elderly or disabled member, households with up to \$7,000 in countable assets (up from \$2,250) may be eligible.
    - For households with an elderly or disabled member, households with up to \$12,000 in countable assets (up from \$3,500) may be eligible.
  - Updates in exclusions from countable assets:
    - Exclude the first \$12,000 in value of one vehicle per licensed driver (updated from \$4,650 per adult household member).
    - Exclude the first \$2,000 in a household's savings accounts (new exclusion).
    - Maintain that counted financial resources. DO NOT include the value of the primary home and lot; household items; business assets, including vehicles used for income-producing purposes; property that produces income; retirement savings/plans; funeral plans and burial plots; education savings; and earned income tax credits.

### UTILITY ALLOWANCES

#### CURRENT:

A loophole related to heating and cooling allowances is used to artificially increase benefits.

- States are given the flexibility to use Standard Utility Allowances (SUA) for Heating and Cooling to ease SNAP administration.
- Households automatically qualify for the SUA if they receive Low Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) payments.
- States, in order to increase SNAP benefits, provide LIHEAP payments of just greater than the \$20 minimum threshold, allowing households to qualify for the SUA, thus increasing the SNAP benefits the household receives, even though the household may not have actual heating and cooling expenses.

#### 2018 FARM BILL:

Requires non-elderly households to incur and demonstrate heating or cooling expenses to receive a standard allowance for such expenses.