



HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

FARM BILL: NUTRITION

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Current eligibility requirements, particularly asset limitations, are outdated and circumvented too frequently.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