The Future of SNAP?
Improving Nutrition Policy to Ensure Health and Food Equity

Panel III: Recent Challenges and Developments and SNAP as Income Supplementation

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Plan

• SNAP’s Track Record - Quickly

• Recent Policy and “Climate” Challenges

• What’s Possibly on the Horizon
Reduces Poverty and Severe Hunger/Malnutrition

SNAP lifted more than 10 million people, including almost 5 million children above poverty in 2012.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Millions of People Lifted</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Earned Income Tax Credit &amp; Child Tax Credit</td>
<td>10.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SNAP (food stamps)</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing assistance</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Security Income</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Assistance for Needy Families</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Note: Figures show the number of people lifted above the poverty line using the federal government's Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) with corrections for underreporting.

Especially Effective at Reducing Deep Poverty

SNAP lifted more than 5 million people, including 2.1 million children above “deep poverty” in 2012.
Also....

- Responds automatically to increases (and decreases) in need
- Supports:
  - People who can’t work; and
  - People who do work
- Participation rates at all time highs
- Error rates at all-time lows
Program Growth Ended

SNAP Costs Starting to Fall, Projected to Fall Further

Spending as a share of gross domestic product

Sources: Office of Management and Budget, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and Congressional Budget Office March 2015 baseline

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities | cbpp.org
Challenges/Threats

- Increased Media Coverage
- Inflammatory Rhetoric – Waste, Fraud, and Abuse
“Something peculiar is happening to our nation’s food assistance program.”

Specific Policies in State Legislatures

- Drug testing and reimposing drug felon ban
- Photos on EBT cards
- Restricting Food Purchases
- No waivers from “work requirements”
- Reimposing asset tests and income limits
- Increased “anti-fraud” activities
Re-Cap of 2014 Farm Bill

• A House-passed bill included $39 billion in cuts over 10 years:
  – Eliminated expanded categorical eligibility
  – Eliminated waivers from 3 month time limit for areas with high unemployment
  – Encouraged states to eliminate SNAP for poor families that cannot find work (Southerland amendment)

• Final Farm Bill rejected these
Under Current Law

- Farm Bill Cut Enacted in 2014
- Recovery Act benefit boost expired in 2014
- 3-month time limit returns in force in 2016

1 million people will lose SNAP
At Federal Level – Near Term

• Budget Resolution assumes
  – At least $125 billion over 10 years in cuts
  – About 35% cut

• No Reconciliation Instructions for Agriculture Committee

• Do not expect legislation this year, unless….

• End-of-year deal/package
At Federal Level – Looking Ahead

• Drumbeat of attacks likely to continue
• Timing and substance of activity federal legislation unclear
• What policy risk world(s) are we in?
  – Block grants or “Opportunity Grants”?
  – Work requirements?
  – Cuts to meet budget targets?
  – Anti-fraud?
  – General anti-poor people?
Any Possibility of Positive Action?

• SNAP benefits are too low
  – IOM study reinforced
  – Recovery Act provided evidence of positive effects

• Groups of people are ineligible
  – 3-month time limit, immigrants.

• E&T pilots may provide interesting evidence
SNAP Families Are Eligible for Other Programs

SNAP Family

98% of Households Eligible for Medicaid Now

100% of kids eligible for free school meals or WIC
Technology

• States updating systems, in conjunction with ACA roll-out
• Opportunities for improved customer service
• Expectation of effective government, eliminating redundancies
• Creative thinking
• Risks as well
Questions? Thoughts?

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