



Federal Nutrition Legislation Supported by the Food Bank of Northern Nevada

In order to achieve a hunger-free and healthy community, the Food Bank of Northern Nevada advocates for the rights of the food insecure on a federal, state, and local level. Through a variety of partnerships, FBNN educates the community and elected officials on the issues affecting our clients and distribution partners.

In collaboration with Feeding America, the Food Bank of Northern Nevada is working to ensure that:

- No one is at risk of hunger
- Families have a solid foundation by having access to nutritious food
- People can get help during hard times

You can make a lasting difference in the lives of those in need by raising awareness of hunger, supporting legislative change, and promoting available resources and solutions.

Child Nutrition

Child nutrition programs touch the lives of thousands of low-income children in Nevada each day, and reauthorization provides an opportunity to improve and strengthen these programs, under Child Nutrition Reauthorization. The Child Nutrition and Women, Infant and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act authorizes all of the federal child nutrition programs, including the School Breakfast, National School Lunch, Child and Adult Care Food, Summer Food Service, and the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Programs and WIC. These programs provide funding to ensure that low-income children have access to healthy and nutritious foods where they live, play and learn. Research demonstrates the ability of the child nutrition programs to improve educational achievement, economic security, nutrition, and health.

The Food Bank of Northern Nevada is advocating for the following:

- Reauthorize child nutrition programs through 2015 bill
- Urge Congress to provide full funding for child nutrition programs in their 2016 budgets
- Identify effective, efficient policies to strengthen child nutrition programs in the 2015 reauthorization
- S. 613 (Davis) Summer Meals Act
- S. 2366 (Murray) Stop Summer Child Hunger Act

Tax Policy

The Food Bank of Northern Nevada, and our partner agencies, rely on support from a variety of sources, including individual giving, government commodities, and donations from the food industry. Tax policy plays a key role in the fight against hunger by rescuing more than 12 million pounds of food in Nevada annually. Approximately 50 percent of the Food Bank of Northern Nevada's annual distribution is donated by grocery stores.

The Food Bank of Northern Nevada supports the following legislation:

- HR 644 (Reed) America Gives More Act.
- Renew and expand the food donation tax deduction to reduce barriers to donation and divert excess food from the landfill to hungry Americans Reject a cap on the charitable giving tax deduction to protect the ability of food banks to raise vitally needed funds.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program

In Nevada, this program is administered by the Nevada Department of Agriculture, and distributed to clients by many organizations throughout the state. A large majority of food banks in the US could not meet the needs of their clients without federal nutrition programs like The Emergency Food Assistance Program, which are provided to clients through food pantries of all sizes.

The Food Bank of Northern Nevada is advocating for the following:

- Gain \$100 million for TEFAP Storage and Distribution Funds to support the infrastructure and distribution capacity necessary to meet need as authorized by 2014 Farm Bill.
- Procure full funding for Section 32 and TEFAP mandatory commodities at levels required by the 2014 Farm Bill.
- Provide \$15 million for TEFAP Infrastructure Grants as authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill.

The Supplemental Food Assistance Program - SNAP

The federal poverty level, for which benefits are established, is set at \$11,770 for an individual and \$24,250 for a family of four.

The 2016 fiscal year budget for the Supplemental Food Assistance Program, formally known as Food Stamps, includes a program cut of \$133.5 billion — more than 17 percent — over the next ten years (2013-2022), which would necessitate ending assistance for thousands of low-income Nevada families. The committee has also included provisions to block grant benefits beginning in the 2016 fiscal year.

Nearly 90 percent of SNAP expenditures are directed to food assistance benefits for low-income households. The remaining funds cover state administrative costs and ensure the program runs properly; policymakers could not possibly achieve \$133.5 billion in reductions without substantially scaling back SNAP eligibility or reducing benefits deeply, with serious effects on low-income families and individuals.

Block granting SNAP means, among other things, that the funds are set at a fixed level, determined through a formula set by Congress — often based on funding received by the state during one calendar year as a baseline. SNAP, as an “entitlement program,” currently and always has had the flexibility to serve whatever number of clients necessary based on current economic conditions. This flexibility saved the lives, so to say, of many Nevadans during the recession, when jobs disappeared and use of the SNAP program tripled. Participation has and continues to diminish as more and better jobs are secured by Nevada’s workforce.

The Food Bank of Northern Nevada opposes any eligibility cuts that would increase food insecurity for individuals and families in Nevada. Additionally, FBNN opposes cuts in monthly benefits for those who qualify.

This document is for informational purposes only. Reviewing the issues on the table for Child Nutrition Reauthorization can be accomplished through FRAC, SOS, Center on Budget and Policy Priority and Feeding America websites, and conclusions can be drawn as individuals and organizations. The Food Bank considers what is best for the hungry person and child in Nevada when determining what to support.

It is suggested that Nevada’s Food Security Council consider taking a position on Child Nutrition Reauthorization, and, with school districts, non-profits and social services organizations throughout the state, provide recommendations to our Congressional Delegation based on the needs of their Nevada constituency, after appropriate research. This legislation is expected to move in the fall of 2015, and we will need to weigh in quickly.