

**NCSL STANDING COMMITTEE on CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND HUMAN SERVICES**

**POLICY DIRECTIVES AND RESOLUTIONS**

**LEGISLATIVE SUMMIT**

**Chicago, Illinois**

**July 27-29, 2026**

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1 **COMMITTEE: CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND HUMAN SERVICES**

2 **POLICY: NCSL RECOGNIZES THE IMPACT OF “BENEFIT**  
3 **CLIFFS”**

4 **TYPE: DIRECTIVE**

5 NCSL supports efforts to minimize “benefits cliffs” or “the cliff effect,” which refers to the  
6 sudden decrease in or elimination of public benefits that can occur with a small increase  
7 in personal earnings. When income increases families sometimes lose some or all  
8 economic supports, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF),  
9 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid and health care, child  
10 care assistance, housing subsidies and school breakfast and lunch programs.

11

12 NCSL strongly encourages federal partners to work with states and territories to find a  
13 timely solution that would remove barriers for individuals to enter or remain in the  
14 workforce and increase their household income. NCSL supports federal efforts, in  
15 conjunction with states and territories, that would explore how to better align TANF,  
16 SNAP, Child Care and Medicaid as work supports, from eligibility and enrollment to  
17 recertification, training and employment – and how to better align these work supports  
18 to mitigate benefit cliffs and increase family financial security.

19

20

1 **COMMITTEE: CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND HUMAN SERVICES**

2 **POLICY: NUTRITIONAL PROGRAMS AND ASSISTANCE**

3 **TYPE: DIRECTIVE**

4 The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) supports the state-federal  
5 partnership to provide nutrition assistance to those in need. State legislators are  
6 concerned about the vast numbers of hungry individuals, and particularly the severity of  
7 hunger among childhood and aging populations. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance  
8 Program (SNAP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), the Special  
9 Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and Child  
10 Nutrition programs alleviate and prevent hunger and enable families to improve their  
11 health and be more productive at school and at work.

12

13 **SNAP: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program/Food Stamps**

14 NCSL urges continued federal funding of the SNAP program at levels sufficient to  
15 provide assistance to all who are eligible or in need due to the rising cost of food. NCSL  
16 also urges the administration and Congress continue to making SNAP and Temporary  
17 Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grants more compatible through the broad-  
18 based categorical eligibility option. This is a policy option for states by which households  
19 may become categorically eligible for SNAP because they qualify for Temporary  
20 Assistance for Needy Families or state maintenance of effort-funded benefits. In times  
21 of economic hardship, SNAP, along with other nutrition assistance programs, offers a  
22 vital safety net for low-income Americans.

23

24 NCSL opposes proposals that would impose costly administrative burdens and un-  
25 funded mandates on state governments or remove state flexibility that is critical to cost-  
26 effective and accurate administration of SNAP.

27

28 NCSL supports U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) initiatives to provide  
29 administrative flexibility through the waiver process by allowing states to implement

30 administrative efficiencies such as telephone interviews, Combined Application Projects,  
31 simplified application forms, a SNAP mobile, and partnerships with community  
32 stakeholder organizations to improve quality, efficiencies, and overall access to  
33 nutritious food. NCSL supports additional waivers that increase administrative flexibility  
34 during a public health emergency.

35

### 36 **SNAP Funding During a Government Shutdown**

- 37 • NCSL urges Congress to ensure full funding for all who are eligible for SNAP  
38 through mandatory appropriations, thereby providing consistent support and  
39 stability for both states and program recipients in the event of a government  
40 shutdown or premature exhaustion of annual appropriations.
- 41 •
- 42 • NCSL urges Congress and the administration to provide automatic authority for  
43 SNAP benefits to continue during a federal shutdown using advance  
44 appropriations or clearly authorized contingency funding sufficient to cover full  
45 monthly benefits.

46

### 47 **SNAP Benefits and Program Design**

48 NCSL recommends that the administration and Congress incorporate the following  
49 issues regarding SNAP benefits and program access into future legislative and  
50 regulatory action:

- 51 • Elimination of the annually indexed caps on excess shelter deductions to allow  
52 families to deduct high shelter costs;
- 53 • Exclusion of the first \$150 a month by a non-custodial parent paid as child  
54 support from consideration as income in determining the SNAP allotment;
- 55 • Elimination of the rules concerning the value of a vehicle that a recipient may  
56 own and still receive SNAP benefits;
- 57 • Federal support and technical assistance for state outreach;
- 58 • Enhancement and simplification of application and eligibility determination  
59 procedures by supporting online screening tools, permitting seniors and disabled  
60 people to apply at Social Security offices, reducing the length of application forms  
61 and allowing use of joint applications;

- 62 • Continuation of state options regarding child support cooperation as a condition  
63 of eligibility for SNAP. NCSL supports the elimination of the fee for SNAP  
64 recipients' child support collection efforts as a further incentive toward meeting  
65 child support obligations.
- 66 • Continuation of state options to disqualify SNAP-eligible individuals who fail to  
67 cooperate with child support enforcement authorities or who are in arrears on  
68 child support obligation. NCSL supports this option and opposes changes that  
69 would mandate these actions;
- 70 • Permit the promotion and acceptance of SNAP at farmers' markets and other  
71 non-grocery store, produce-oriented venues, for example: from a small farmer;  
72 and
- 73 • Continue to support current state options regarding categorical eligibility and  
74 "heat and eat."
- 75 • Continue funding the permanent Summer EBT program.

76

## 77 **SNAP and Legal Immigrants**

78

79 NCSL supports access to SNAP for eligible legal immigrant children and families and  
80 recognizes the critical role nutrition assistance plays in supporting household stability.

81

82 NCSL notes that federal legislation in 2025 significantly narrowed SNAP eligibility for  
83 lawfully present non-citizens, limiting eligibility primarily to lawful permanent residents  
84 and a small number of additional categories and eliminating eligibility for certain  
85 populations previously able to participate.

86

87 These changes have created administrative complexity for states, particularly in mixed-  
88 status families during application and recertification processes.

89

90 NCSL urges the administration and Congress to:

- 91 • Ensure clear, consistent and timely federal guidance on eligibility determinations;

- 92 • Provide sufficient administrative funding and flexibility to support implementation;
  - 93 • Engage state lawmakers in decisions affecting eligibility; and
  - 94 • Consider the impact of eligibility restrictions on states and households in future
- 95 policy deliberations.

96

### 97 **SNAP Employment and Training Program (SNAP E&T)**

98 NCSL supports the objectives of self-sufficiency promoted by the SNAP Employment  
99 and Training program (SNAP E&T) and will work with the federal government toward  
100 that goal. NCSL urges the administration and Congress to provide funding to support  
101 states in implementing work requirements and allow states flexibility to create, fund, and  
102 integrate SNAP E&T programs with similar state programs, particularly TANF, the  
103 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Medicaid. NCSL also supports  
104 program simplification and coordination between TANF, Medicaid and SNAP.

105

106 In addition, NCSL appreciates the USDA's previous willingness to grant states waivers  
107 of the three-month time limit for non-working able-bodied adults without dependents in  
108 areas impacted by an insufficient number of jobs and high unemployment and USDA's  
109 technical assistance to states. NCSL urges Congress and the administration to provide  
110 states with maximum flexibility to respond to local employment conditions.

111

### 112 **SNAP Program Quality Control/Judicial Waiver**

113 NCSL strongly supports moving away from a system based on error rates to one that  
114 awards bonuses for accuracy. NCSL urges the federal government to improve  
115 processes related to waiver appeals and reinvestment of claims, including outcome  
116 measures of program goals.

117

118 State legislators also support efforts to:

- 119 • Focus on program measurement and evaluation through positive incentives and
- 120 urges Congress to reexamine funding levels.

- 121 • Continue to settle Quality Control claims through state reinvestment in program  
122 improvement.
- 123 • Distinguish administrative errors from fraud.
- 124 • Pair accountability with technology modernization funding.

125

### 126 **Electronic Benefit Transfer and Automated Systems (EBT)**

127 NCSL supports the current implementation of EBT systems and supports allowing cards  
128 to be used for multiple programs.

129

130 NCSL believes states should be allowed to negotiate the terms of EBT with food  
131 marketers, farmers markets and financial institutions. NCSL opposes preemption of  
132 state laws that govern financial institutions pertaining to a nationwide EBT system. As  
133 additional income support programs are added to EBT systems that are state-only or  
134 state-federally governed, the federal government must not preempt state benefits law.

135

136 NCSL urges Congress and the administration to provide federal funding to support state  
137 efforts to transition EBT to chip security technology.

138

### 139 **SNAP Program Flexibility and Waivers**

140 NCSL believes that the federal waiver process should recognize state participation rates  
141 and need. States need flexibility for further innovation, and state legislators prefer to  
142 have options rather than waivers for policy changes that are not in need of further  
143 evaluation. State legislators need to be included in the waiver process prior to a waiver  
144 being granted. Plan approval and the results of demonstration grants should be shared  
145 with state legislators.

146

147 NCSL supports the authority for states to use, at their option, contractors to support  
148 administrative and eligibility functions in SNAP. NCSL asks the federal government to  
149 remove barriers to this option so that states can meet surges in demand, address

150 workforce shortages, align SNAP flexibility with other programs and ensure the right  
151 benefits go to the right people at the right time.

152

### 153 **Emergency Food Assistance and Commodity Distribution**

154 NCSL urges Congress to fully fund The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)  
155 at its authorized level. NCSL believes that Congress should provide adequate  
156 administrative funds to facilitate the efficient distribution of food and should include  
157 sufficient safeguards to prevent program abuse. NCSL urges the USDA to make  
158 additional surplus commodities available to states, upon request, when additional  
159 surplus food becomes available. We also urge the USDA to provide administrative  
160 funding support for sorting, packaging, processing, and transporting donated food.  
161 NCSL supports federal programs that deliver commodities through farmers' markets  
162 and the child nutrition commodity programs.

163

### 164 **Child Nutrition**

165 NCSL urges Congress to reauthorize legislation to continue and fully fund child nutrition  
166 programs. NCSL urges the USDA to emphasize the importance of nutritionally  
167 appropriate foods and avoiding those high in sugar, fat and sodium. NCSL also urges  
168 Congress to protect, strengthen and improve the child nutrition programs by building on  
169 the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 to ensure that children continue to have  
170 access to nutritious meals throughout the year.

171

172 NCSL urges Congress to invest in the ability and resources of states to provide access  
173 to healthy and affordable meals before, during and after school for all children, all year  
174 long and to ensure low-income children's access to and participation in child nutrition  
175 programs. NCSL supports accurate eligibility determination in federal programs, but  
176 urges Congress to ensure efforts to serve only eligible children do not deter program  
177 participation.

178

### 179 **Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)**

180 NCSL supports the WIC program and its objectives. NCSL encourages the  
181 administration and Congress to ensure flexibility for the time it takes to process and  
182 approve applications for WIC applicants and ensure continued financial support to  
183 maximize WIC coverage for women, infants and children in need.

184  
185 NCSL supports congressional efforts to improve program administration by authorizing  
186 limited borrowing between fiscal years for the WIC program, and by requiring the timely  
187 apportionment of WIC funds to the states.

188  
189 NCSL supports funding to allow technological improvements to WIC and to allow the  
190 implementation of WIC Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT). NCSL also urges Congress  
191 to increase the flexibility of WIC appointments through increased access to remote  
192 appointments and extended certification periods as well as to support equitable access  
193 to the WIC food package through modernization efforts that increase access to online  
194 ordering, online purchasing, and delivery.

195

### 196 **School Breakfast and Lunch Programs**

197 NCSL strongly supports the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast  
198 Program as critically important to the well-being and education of young children. NCSL  
199 supports USDA reimbursements to schools for free, reduced-price, and paid meals  
200 under the provisions of the school lunch and school breakfast programs.

201

202 NCSL supports current flexibility in the Community Eligibility Provision, which helps  
203 reduce paperwork for parents and schools with a high percentage of eligible students.

204 NCSL urges Congress to expand the well-documented benefits of the Community  
205 Eligibility Provision, which allows schools to serve meals at no charge to all students if  
206 enough are identified as qualifying for other assistance programs, by lowering the  
207 minimum identified student percentage (ISP), increasing the ISP multiplier, expanding  
208 direct certification with Medicaid data nationwide, and supporting the improvement of  
209 direct certification systems.

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NCSL urges the USDA to emphasize nutritionally appropriate foods. NCSL supports the USDA’s proposal to create a pilot program for school districts to provide more nutritious alternatives that would allow experimentation without risk of financial loss to those schools.

NCSL supports permanent authorization of the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer for Children program. NCSL also supports making funding for the program mandatory, and expanding the reach of the program to kids eligible for free or reduced-price school meals in all states, tribal nations and localities in order to close the summer meals gap. NCSL urges Congress to permanently authorize the Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer system, allowing authorities to quickly deliver increased nutritional aid during times of crisis.

**Summer Food Service Program for Children**

NCSL supports the federal Summer Food Service Program for Children and restoration of meal reimbursement rates that allow low-income children to receive a nutritious lunch in the summer. NCSL supports policies that will make it easier for non-profit community groups and public entities to sponsor the program and will allow the program to be available in more neighborhoods and rural areas. NCSL urges Congress to allow for more flexibility around where children are able to access and eat summer meals by allowing for non-congregate models in communities where summer meals sites are not available and by lowering the threshold required to operate sites open to all children.

**Child and Adult Care Food Program**

NCSL supports flexibility to allow seniors to transport uneaten food they receive while participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. NCSL opposes the elimination or reduction of the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

239 NCSL strongly supports efforts to expand Child and Adult Care Food Program to older  
240 children in after-school programs, and to ensure that the program is available in more  
241 neighborhoods and rural areas. Additionally, NCSL supports state options to expand  
242 this program to evening meals in after-school programs.

243

#### 244 **Combating Childhood and Adult Obesity**

245 NCSL supports federal efforts to find solutions for childhood and adult obesity without  
246 imposing mandates. NCSL urges Congress to fully fund these programs and supports a  
247 proposal to fund a pilot program for the states with the greatest incidence of childhood  
248 and adult obesity to develop policies and procedures to reduce obesity.

249

#### 250 **Nutritional Quality Measures for Older Adults**

251 NCSL supports the quality measures used by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid  
252 Services (CMS) to quantify health care processes, outcomes, patient perceptions, and  
253 systems that are associated with the ability to provide quality health care and/or that  
254 relate to “quality goals” for health care. CMS introduced four electronic clinical quality  
255 measures that would cover screening for malnutrition, assessment of those screened as  
256 at-risk for malnutrition, diagnosis of malnutrition, and creation of a nutrition care plan.  
257 NCSL urges CMS to adopt quality measures on malnutrition to heighten the importance  
258 of identification, evaluation, and treatment of malnutrition in the elderly.

259

260 NCSL also supports establishing malnutrition care as a measure of quality health care.  
261 NCSL urges the administration and Congress to support state efforts to reduce  
262 malnutrition in the elderly and heighten awareness of nutrition in elderly communities.

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1 **COMMITTEE: CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND HUMAN SERVICES**

2 **POLICY: ADDRESSING IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES**  
3 **OF THE FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES**  
4 **ACT**

5 **TYPE: RESOLUTION (Sponsored by Committee Vice**  
6 **Chairs, Del. Adam Burkhammer (WV) and Rep.**  
7 **Joyce Mason (IL))**

8 **WHEREAS**, statistics show that growing up in a safe and supportive home provides  
9 children with essential resources and emotional stability, which significantly improves  
10 their cognitive, emotional, and long-term success.

11

12 **WHEREAS**, children who experience family separation or enter the foster care system  
13 are at a higher risk of behavioral issues, instability, and emotional trauma.

14

15 **WHEREAS**, supporting safe and healthy families and preventing children from entering  
16 foster care must be a priority for improving child welfare outcomes and reducing the  
17 negative effects on children.

18

19 **WHEREAS**, the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018 (FFPSA) was intended to  
20 provide more federal funding to support state efforts to keep children safely with their  
21 families and prevent placement in foster care.

22

23 **WHEREAS**, FFPSA requires states that seek to use Title IV-E prevention services to  
24 submit a prevention services plan that explains how the state will assess children and  
25 their families for prevention services and which evidence-based services from the  
26 federal Prevention Services Clearinghouse they will use.

27

28 **WHEREAS**, FFPSA requires half of state spending on prevention services to be used  
29 for programs rated as “well-supported” – the highest tier of evidence – by the Prevention  
30 Services Clearinghouse.

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**WHEREAS**, as of December 2025, there were 95 programs in the Prevention Services Clearinghouse that were eligible for inclusion in state plans. Of these, only 20 were rated as “well-supported,” the highest tier of evidence.

**WHEREAS**, as of FY2023, 42 states, DC, Puerto Rico, and four Tribes have approved prevention services plans, but 60 percent of those jurisdictions had never submitted prevention services reimbursement claims.

**WHEREAS**, according to data from the [Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation](#), as of FY2023, Title IV-E reimbursement claims for prevention services accounted for less than two percent of overall Title IV-E program reimbursement claims and Title IV-E prevention services only serve about two percent of the total number of children served by Title IV-E programs.

**WHEREAS**, a [recent report](#) by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation notes that states have faced widespread implementation challenges with FFPSA due to factors including administrative burden, evaluation requirements, and mismatches between community needs and programs with well-supported evidence included in the Prevention Services Clearinghouse.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the National Conference of State Legislatures urges the federal government to work with states to better understand and address challenges to FFPSA implementation.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the National Conference of State Legislatures urges Congress and the administration to include the perspectives of state legislators in any regulatory or legislative efforts to update FFPSA.

60 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCSL urges Congress and  
61 the Administration to provide states with greater flexibility in meeting FFPSA evidence-  
62 based service requirements, including expanding the availability and approval of  
63 promising and supported practices that address the diverse needs of children and  
64 families.

65

66 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCSL urges Congress and  
67 the Administration to recognize workforce shortages, provider capacity limitations, and  
68 rural service delivery barriers that affect states' ability to implement FFPSA prevention  
69 programs.

70

71 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCSL urges Congress and  
72 the Administration to simplify federal claiming, reporting, and evaluation requirements  
73 associated with Title IV-E prevention services in order to improve state participation and  
74 maximize services to children and families.

75

76 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCSL urges Congress and  
77 the Administration to ensure states may utilize culturally responsive, community-based,  
78 and locally effective prevention services while those programs pursue additional  
79 evidence review through the Prevention Services Clearinghouse.

80

81 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCSL urges Congress and  
82 the Administration to improve the timeliness and transparency of the Prevention  
83 Services Clearinghouse review process so states can more rapidly access  
84 reimbursement for effective prevention programs.

85

86 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCSL urges Congress and  
87 the Administration to partner with states in evaluating prevention outcomes and sharing  
88 best practices.