

**Greater Chicago Food Depository  
Statement on the Farm Bill  
December 12, 2018**



The Greater Chicago Food Depository applauds Congressional leaders for reaching a Farm Bill compromise that will provide essential food assistance to millions of Americans. This version of the Farm Bill, which the Senate and House approved this week by overwhelming majorities, protects the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) from harmful proposed cuts or changes.

This important piece of legislation has always been an exercise in bipartisan negotiation and compromise. This year was no different. The final agreement brokered by leaders in both houses of Congress largely protects federal nutrition programs, including SNAP and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).

SNAP is our nation's frontline defense against hunger, expanding and contracting by design in times of need. Simply put, SNAP works as it should. We're grateful to Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kansas, Sen. Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., Rep. Mike Conaway, R-Texas, and Rep. Collin Peterson, D-Minn., for spearheading this compromise. And thank you to members of our Illinois delegation who have consistently voted to protect SNAP and other federal nutrition programs.

Most importantly, the Farm Bill agreement does not include the stricter work requirements for able-bodied adults receiving SNAP benefits that were proposed in an earlier version of the bill – program cuts that would have imperiled crucial food assistance for hundreds of thousands of Illinois adults and millions of Americans.

Many SNAP recipients deemed able-bodied would struggle to meet the time requirement for a host of reasons, including undiagnosed mental illnesses, lack of transportation and recent incarceration. Taking away their food assistance wouldn't make it any easier for them to find success.

More than 42 million Americans – including nearly 1.9 million in Illinois – receive SNAP benefits. The majority of them are children, older adults and people with disabilities. No one should have to go hungry – that should be something on which we all can agree.

This Farm Bill represents a respectable compromise that guarantees food on the table for millions of Americans struggling to make ends meet. It's also an important reminder of what we can achieve when we work together and find common ground.

The Food Depository thanks our many advocacy partners who raised their voices to protect SNAP in this Farm Bill. Whether you wrote a letter, mailed a postcard or called your member of Congress, you played a critical role in helping our lawmakers reach this compromise. Because of you, more of our neighbors will have the food they need to be healthy and to thrive.