

**Greater Chicago Food Depository  
Statement on proposed SNAP rule changes  
December 21, 2018**



The Greater Chicago Food Depository stands opposed to the proposed rule change announced by the Trump administration on Thursday that would result in hundreds of thousands of Americans losing needed food assistance.

It's particularly disappointing that this harmful proposal comes after lawmakers in Congress negotiated a bipartisan Farm Bill that largely protects the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Simply put, SNAP is the most effective anti-hunger program in the U.S., providing crucial support to more than 42 million Americans and nearly 1.9 million people in Illinois.

This proposed rule change would severely limit the ability of states to request and receive waivers from existing work requirements within SNAP for able-bodied adults without dependents. Many SNAP recipients considered able-bodied still may not be able to work the 20 hours a week required by the program for a host of reasons, including undiagnosed health conditions, recent incarceration, discriminatory hiring practices and lack of transportation.

The reality is that hours are often inconsistent for low-wage work, making a time threshold difficult to consistently meet. And many of those who could lose their SNAP benefits are military veterans who deserve our full support.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that more than 750,000 able-bodied adults without dependents would lose SNAP benefits within three years of implementation. But taking away their food assistance doesn't make it any more likely they'll be successfully employed.

Last month, Gov. Bruce Rauner requested a waiver from the time limit for most of Illinois, continuing an action of previous governors dating back to before the Recession. We commended this prudent and compassionate decision. More than 35 other states and territories also request waivers in order to protect people from hunger.

We call on all of our friends, partners and advocates to submit public comment in opposition to the proposed rule change once it's posted on the Federal Registry. And we ask the White House to reconsider this cruel proposal that was already rejected by Congress in the crafting of the bipartisan Farm Bill.