

jOp-ed/LTE Templates:

Concerned Community Member:

Congress Must Protect SNAP and Medicaid – Our Communities Depend on It

As the resident of **Douglas, MA**, I am really concerned about what's happening in Congress right now. Proposals in the current budget process would gut SNAP and Medicaid, two of the most essential programs that help my community put food on the table and get the healthcare they need. **[In my community where we have a Food Pantry]**, I see how these programs support not only the dignity and health of our neighbors, but also the stability of our local economy.

Programs like SNAP allow customers to stretch their food dollars and buy fresh, local produce, working collaboratively with local farms. When families can afford to shop, local businesses and farmers earn income. SNAP isn't just a nutrition program — it's an economic engine.

If Congress moves forward with the proposed cuts, the consequences will be severe. Our local stores and markets will feel the hit in their bottom lines. People in our community — seniors, families with children, and people with disabilities — may lose their access to nutritious food and essential healthcare.

Health and food security are deeply connected. When people have access to good food and stable healthcare, they are better able to work, care for their families, and contribute to their communities. Communities like ours become places of connection and resilience — but only when the policies that support low-income families remain strong.

Congress must reject proposals that would weaken SNAP and Medicaid. Instead, they should prioritize investments that strengthen our food systems, support rural economies, and ensure all Americans — no matter their income — can meet their basic needs with dignity.

We need to help our friends and family in other states urge their Senators to oppose these harmful cuts. Call your friends and family, whether they're across the country or just over the border in Maine, and urge them to contact their Senators and demand a No vote on these devastating cuts to SNAP and Medicaid.

Our community, our farmers, and our health depend on it.

SNAP Service Provider

Title: Congress is about to leave our most vulnerable citizens behind. This is a moral failure.

What would you do if your grocery budget was slashed — not by a few dollars, but enough to make you choose between meals and rent? What if you got sick but couldn't afford to see a doctor? These aren't hypothetical questions for the families I work with every day. They're the real consequences of the cuts Congress is currently considering to SNAP and Medicaid.

I work for [organization, town/region] that supports residents across [state]. Many of the people we serve work their whole lives but cannot get ahead of the cost of living. They are left to rely on programs like SNAP and Medicaid to make ends meet. These programs are often the thin line between stability and crisis.

Without SNAP, many would have to skip meals or rely on emergency food shelves just to get through the month. Without Medicaid, they'd delay care, miss critical medications, or go without essential services to support their long-term health. I've seen what happens when people fall through the cracks. These proposals by Congress are not just bad policy — they are a moral failure, which will harm our community.

These cuts wouldn't just hurt individuals. They would ripple through families, schools, senior centers and more. When we invest in programs like SNAP and Medicaid, we support people accessing food with dignity, and we take pressure off overwhelmed healthcare and social service systems.

Slashing these lifelines won't solve our country's problems — it will only create new ones. Congress must reject these budget proposals and protect the basic rights of people to afford groceries and healthcare, no matter their age or income.

We need to help our friends and family in other states urge their Senators to oppose these harmful cuts. Call your friends and family, whether they're across the country or just over the border, and urge them to contact their Senators and demand a No vote on these devastating cuts to SNAP and Medicaid.

Our neighbors deserve better than this.

Person with Lived Experience with SNAP

Title: Congress Wants to Cut My Grocery Budget. I Don't Know How I'll Fill the Gap.

Intro:

What would you do if your grocery budget was slashed — not by a little, but enough to make you skip meals or choose between food and rent? What if you got sick but couldn't afford to see a doctor? That's the future I'm staring down as Congress debates whether to gut SNAP in their latest budget proposals.

[Insert a bit about you, and how SNAP supports you to focus on succeeding in school]

- **An example:** *I am a mom to an 8-year-old kid. I work part time and take classes on top of that. I am doing everything I can to give my child and me a good life, and SNAP is an important part of our lives. SNAP means I can buy groceries to keep both of us nourished and healthy.*

[How would cuts to SNAP impact you? What worries you about the proposals?]

- **An example:** *Cuts to SNAP aren't abstract for people like me. They mean real harm. They mean skipping meals during finals. They mean putting off going to the doctor because I can't afford the visit. Under the proposed increased work requirement, I could lose SNAP for up to three years if I weren't able to report working more than 20-hours a week.*

Why is SNAP important? Why should people care about protecting SNAP?]

- **An example:** *SNAP is a lifeline, but it also strengthens our communities. When I use SNAP at my local farmers market, I'm supporting local growers. When I stay healthy, I can show up for work, for school, and for my community. That's how these programs are supposed to work — with dignity and impact.*

What's the final message you want to leave people with? What does the government need to do?

- **An example:** *Congress needs to stop treating basic human needs like political bargaining chips. If our leaders want a stronger economy and healthier communities, cutting people off from food and healthcare is the exact wrong way to get there. We deserve better.*