

SSB 1105 would make it difficult for struggling families to learn, work and thrive

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps people put food on the table and get back on their feet after tough times. **SSB 1105 would kick Iowans off SNAP though they are eligible**, by putting up unnecessary red tape and creating more cracks for families to fall through when seeking food assistance.

Why cutting SNAP is such a short-sighted idea:

- **SNAP plays a central role in fighting hunger.** In November 2022, 12% of Iowa households with children reported that the children sometimes or often were not eating enough because the household could not afford enough food.¹ Nearly 70% of SNAP participants live in families with children:² There's simply no way to make the kinds of SNAP cuts proposed in this bill without harming children.
- **SNAP helps families fill the gap between what they earn and what it takes to get by.** Over 100,000 Iowa families with at least one full-time worker can't meet even a bare-bones budget on wages alone. A single parent with one child, for example, needs to make \$21.16 an hour to meet their basic needs.³ The wages needed for any family to meet basic needs are far above the state's minimum wage — and for some families above the state's median wage.
- **SNAP promotes good health**, especially among children: SNAP participation is linked with better physical health, fewer missed school days, improved academic achievement and decreased developmental risk.⁴ The program works to improve child development and educational attainment and helps to prevent disease and increase lifetime earnings of recipients.⁵
- **SNAP benefits don't impact the state budget and state SNAP administrative costs have been stable.** The program is funded 100% with federal funds. The state and the federal governments split the administrative costs, which have remained largely stable over time.

This bill would cut people off SNAP in several ways:

- **It would implement asset testing** that penalizes Iowa households for having meager savings or more than one vehicle. Asset testing raises state administrative costs and limits a family's ability to get ahead. Policies like this don't lift people out of poverty, they keep them in it.
- **It would institute redundant eligibility verification.** There is already a process in place for identity and income verification when applying for SNAP in Iowa. New duplicative requirements would snare people who are eligible but struggle to manage required paperwork. The state would need to hire many more FTEs to administer extra eligibility verifications. This means we would be spending millions of state dollars to pull federal dollars out of local Iowa grocery stores.

- **It would require custodial parents to cooperate with child support enforcement. Such a move** would take food away from children, and potentially threaten family safety and well-being. There is also little evidence to suggest it would work. North Carolina, which implemented a similar pilot program, found it to be highly inefficient. It cost \$2 million to implement, but only led to a total of about \$7,000 in child support payments to 12 families over a year, or only about \$50 a month.⁶

To learn more about and SNAP and food security, contact policy advocate Natalie Veldhouse at nveldhouse@commonnoodiowa.org or visit www.commongoodiowa.org.

¹ Population Reference Bureau Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey, November 2022, accessed at the Kids Count Data Center, <https://datacenter.kidscount.org>.

² CBPP fact sheet https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/snap_factsheet_iowa.pdf

³ Peter Fisher and Natalie Veldhouse, "The Cost of Living in Iowa 2022: Many households working hard, but barely scraping by." April 2022. Common Good Iowa. https://www.commongoodiowa.org/media/cms/220427_Cost_of_Living_2022_FINAL_E5F2092545A1E.pdf

⁴ Center for Science in the Public Interest, "The Public Health Impact of SNAP." March 2022. https://www.cspinet.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/The_Public_Health_Impact_of_SNAP.pdf

⁵ Feeding America, "Child Food Insecurity: The Economic Impact on our Nation." 2009. <https://www.nokidhungry.org/sites/default/files/child-economy-study.pdf>

⁶ North Carolina Department of Human Services, "Child Care Subsidy Recipients to Cooperate with Child Support Services/Demonstration Project." 1 March 2019. Accessed at https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Portals/0/documents/pdf/S/SL_2017-57_Section_11B_7_a_Child_Care_Subsidy_Cooperation_Final.pdf?ver=2019-03-26-161758-447