



August 5, 2026

The Honorable John Boozman
United States Senate
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
328 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
United States Senate
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328 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Boozman and Ranking Member Klobuchar:

AARP, which advocates on behalf of 125 million Americans age 50 and older, writes in strong support of the nutrition programs that millions of older adults rely on. The Farm Bill plays a vital role in helping older Americans afford and access nutritious food, and even small changes to program design can significantly affect their ability to meet basic needs. As the Committee works on reauthorization, we urge you to prioritize and strengthen these essential programs.

Older Americans and Food Insecurity

Food insecurity among older Americans is widespread and worsening. In 2024, [12.7 million adults age 50 and older – 1 in 10 – experienced food insecurity](#), the highest number in more than a decade. Factors such as rising food costs, transportation barriers, and physical limitations continue to make it difficult for many older adults to reliably access nutritious food.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) stands as the nation's most effective nutrition assistance program and a critical lifeline for millions of older adults at risk of food insecurity. Through modest but meaningful support to purchase food, the program helps older Americans maintain their health, dignity, and independence. A growing body of research demonstrates that SNAP participation among older adults is linked to fewer hospital and emergency room visits and lower rates of hospital and long-term care admissions – evidence that it is not only a nutrition program, but a smart investment that may reduce overall health care costs.

SNAP is especially critical for older Americans who face greater difficulty gaining and retaining employment and who often live on fixed or limited incomes. Yet despite its clear value, older adults have historically participated in SNAP at significantly lower rates than other age groups. Persistent barriers to access, coupled with recent policy and programmatic changes, could make it more difficult for eligible older Americans to get the help they need – particularly for those living in rural areas and those who face barriers to shopping for and preparing food. Addressing these barriers and improving access is essential to ensuring vulnerable older adults can continue to receive the benefits for which they are eligible.

AARP urges the Committee to include the following priorities in the final Farm Bill package:

Protecting SNAP Access for Older Americans

We remain deeply concerned about recent changes that shift more costs onto states through higher SNAP administrative and benefit cost-sharing requirements. [The Congressional Budget Office \(CBO\) estimates](#) this policy will reduce SNAP participation while increasing state spending by billions of dollars. AARP supports delaying implementation of these changes and we urge you to consider additional ways to mitigate their impact on older Americans.

Millions of older Americans rely on SNAP to help put food on the table each month, and many already struggle to keep up with rising costs for housing, health care, utilities, and groceries. When states are confronted with substantial new SNAP obligations, they may be forced to make difficult budgetary and administrative decisions that can reduce enrollment, create additional barriers to participation, limit outreach, or otherwise make it harder for eligible individuals to receive benefits. For older adults, even brief disruptions in access to nutrition assistance can have serious consequences. Missed benefits can mean skipped meals, poorer nutrition, worsening health conditions, and greater difficulty aging safely and independently in their homes and communities. Because older adults already participate in SNAP at lower rates than other eligible populations, AARP is particularly concerned that these changes could leave even eligible older Americans without the food assistance they need, compounding the effects of recent disenrollments and increasing hunger and hardship among some of the nation's most vulnerable seniors.

For these reasons, AARP strongly urges the Committee to delay implementation of both the administrative and benefit cost-share provisions, ensure that states have sufficient opportunity to address their error rates, and reconsider the significant increase in state cost-sharing requirements. These steps would give states needed time to prepare for any changes while helping protect older Americans from unintended disruptions in access to the nutritious food they rely on to remain healthy and independent. AARP believes protecting older adults from hunger and food insecurity must remain a central consideration as the Committee evaluates these proposals.

Strengthening Complementary Senior Food Programs

We support reauthorizing the Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) and establishing a Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) home-delivery pilot program. Older Americans, particularly those living on limited incomes, rely on programs such as SFMNP and CSFP to access healthy, nutritious food and support their health and independence. We are encouraged by the continued investments in the health of older Americans through these programs.

While SNAP is the nation's largest anti-hunger program, serving 11.6 million adults age 50 and older, complementary nutrition programs like SFMNP and CSFP help fill critical gaps. Together, these programs provide a consistent source of healthy foods and play an essential role in helping older adults meet their basic nutritional needs.

Older Americans, especially those in rural communities, may face difficulties accessing healthy food. [More than 600,000 older adults](#) stop driving each year due to changes in health, vision, or mobility, making accessible and age-friendly nutrition programs increasingly important. For many older adults, obtaining healthy food is not simply a matter of affordability but also of physical access. Given these challenges, AARP supports modernizing CSFP through a home-delivery pilot program. Delivering nutritious foods directly to needy seniors would help reduce transportation barriers, improve food security, and enable more older adults to remain healthy and independent in their homes and communities.

Supporting Healthy Aging Through Increased Access to Nutritious Foods

AARP also supports policies that help older adults access a broad range of affordable, nutritious foods. Recognizing the important connection between nutrition, chronic disease prevention, and the ability to age in place, AARP supports incentive programs like the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP).

Ensuring that older adults can reliably access nutritious food, regardless of where they live or their physical limitations, is essential to promoting independence, health, and quality of life. We encourage continued attention to innovative approaches as you consider ways to improve nutrition programs in the future.

AARP looks forward to working with you to advance legislation that reflects the needs of older Americans and supports their health and economic security. We specifically urge you to ensure any measure under consideration protects access to SNAP by addressing the changes to state cost-sharing requirements. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, or have your staff contact Lauren Ryan of AARP Government Affairs at lryan@aarpp.org.

Sincerely,



Bill Sweeney
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs