

## Adams, Gillibrand Introduce Landmark Anti-Hunger Legislation



**From** Sam Spencer <sam.spencer@mail.house.gov>  
**To** <sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org>  
**Reply-To** <sam.spencer@mail.house.gov>  
**Date** 2023-05-03 15:51



Hello Sarah,

# Adams, Gillibrand Introduce Landmark Anti-Hunger Legislation

*The Closing the Meal Gap Act of 2023 would  
improve food security for millions of Americans*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** (May 3, 2023) – Today, **Congresswoman Alma Adams (NC-12)** announced the introduction of her signature anti-hunger legislation, the *Closing the Meal Gap Act of 2023*. The bill is co-led by **Congresswomen Nydia M. Velázquez (NY-07), Barbara Lee (CA-12), Jahana Haynes (CT-05), and Summer Lee (PA-12)** in the U.S. House of Representatives and by **Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY)** in the United States Senate. 64 members of the House are original cosponsors of the legislation.

“Over 40 million Americans depend on SNAP for their meals, even though SNAP benefits are not generous enough to feed a family or prevent child hunger. Unfortunately, the hunger crisis in North Carolina and across the United States is real, and it is devastating,” **said Congresswoman Adams, a senior member of the House Committee on Agriculture.** “The Closing the Meal Gap Act will address this issue by strengthening the SNAP program for millions of people, including older Americans, people with disabilities, children, struggling parents, students, unemployed and underemployed people, and veterans. I’m reintroducing this transformative legislation in the United States House of Representatives, with Senator Gillibrand as our partner in the Senate, so we can take a historic step towards ending hunger in the United States. No person should ever go hungry or malnourished in the greatest country in the world.”

[An audio recording of Rep. Adams’ quote is available here.](#)

[Text of the bill is available here.](#)

[Background on the bill is available here.](#)

“I was proud to work with Congresswoman Adams, the Coalition for Food Security Puerto Rico, and the rest of my colleagues to introduce the Closing the Meal Gap Act, which will strengthen SNAP benefits and help millions of working families put food on the table,” **said Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez.** “Importantly, this bill also includes provisions to finally expand SNAP to the people of Puerto Rico. Currently, Puerto Rico relies on the Nutrition Assistance Program, a capped block grant that does not fluctuate to meet the needs of Puerto Ricans in the wake of disasters like Hurricane María or the COVID-19 pandemic. The Closing the Meal Gap Act will facilitate a speedy and long overdue transition to SNAP for Puerto Rico and help ensure the Island has the tools it needs to combat food insecurity.”

“At a time when extremist Republicans are pushing for devastating cuts to SNAP, it is more important than ever that we not only protect this vital program but highlight its efficacy and the need to expand, not reduce, its scope,” **said Congresswoman Barbara Lee, member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies.** “Millions across the country and in California face food insecurity every day, unsure where their children’s next meal may come from. As a single mother raising two boys, I experienced these tough choices firsthand. SNAP allowed me to get through a difficult period, and others deserve that same support. I’m grateful for the leadership of Rep. Adams and Senator Gillibrand on this issue, and urge my colleagues to give the hunger crisis the attention it deserves and pass the Closing the Meal Gap Act of 2023.”

“SNAP is one of the most effective tools to lift families out of poverty and boost the economy. With more than 490,000 Connecticut residents struggling with hunger, now is the time to fortify this life-sustaining program – not make detrimental cuts. We can take meaningful steps towards ending hunger by remaining steadfast in protecting and expanding SNAP,” **said Congresswoman Haynes, Ranking Member of the Nutrition, Foreign Agriculture, and Horticulture Subcommittee.** “Hunger is not inevitable – it is a policy

choice. Today, with the introduction of the Closing the Meal Gap Act, I join Representatives Adams, Velázquez, Lee, and Senator Gillibrand in choosing to ensure vulnerable families can put food on the table and live healthy lives.”

**Congresswoman Summer Lee** said, “My family and I depended on food stamps growing up. So do nearly two million Pennsylvanians. After House Republicans shamelessly passed a bill to tear away food assistance from almost 100,000 women, children, and seniors, NOW is the time to protect and expand SNAP food assistance as an anti-hunger lifeline for all. I’m proud to help introduce the Closing the Meal Gap Act to fight back and strengthen SNAP for millions of Americans—from older folks and veterans to disabled folks, struggling parents, students, unemployed and underemployed people — because in a country with as many billionaires as we have, hunger is a policy choice. Bold action like this is how we eradicate it.”

“We live in the richest nation in the world, and more than 40 million Americans still depend on food assistance. I am proud to lead my Democratic colleagues in introducing the *Closing the Meal Gap Act*, a bill that enhances SNAP benefits and puts food on the table for those who need it most,” **said Senator Gillibrand**. “Despite this, Republicans in Congress are willing to slash federal spending for this life-saving program and play politics with people’s lives. No one in the United States should go hungry, and I will never turn my back on the more than 40 million Americans, including 15 million children, who depend on SNAP.”

Original cosponsors in the House include **Mary Gay Scanlon (PA-05), Ro Khanna (CA-17), Dwight Evans (PA-03), Jake Auchincloss (MA-04), Ilhan Omar (MN-05), Nikema Williams (GA-05), Frederica S. Wilson (FL-14), Rep. Linda Sánchez (CA-38), Gerald E. Connolly (VA-11), Rep. Jacobo Sanchez, Jesús “Chuy” García (IL-04), Mark Takano (CA-39), Jan Schakowsky (IL-09), Joseph Morelle (NY-25), Jill Tokuda (HI-02), Terri A. Sewell (AL-07), Derek Kilmer (WA-06), Paul Tonko (NY-20), Eric Swalwell (CA-14), Salud Carbajal (CA-24), James P. McGovern (MA-02), Adam Smith (WA-09), Jimmy Panetta (CA-19), Suzan K. DelBene (WA-01), Mark DeSaulnier (CA-10), Dina Titus (NV-01), Suzanne Bonamici (OR-01), Jared Moskowitz (FL-23), Gwen Moore (WI-04), Earl Blumenauer (OR-03), Lucy McBath (GA-07), Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC-AL), Marilyn Strickland (WA-10), Doanld M. Payne, Jr. (NJ-10), Mark Pocan (WI-02), Jamie Raskin (MD-08), Seth Moulton (MA-06), Nanette Diaz Barragán (CA-44), Andy Kim (NJ-03), Kweisi Mfume (MD-07), C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (MD-02), Judy Chu (CA-28), Rep. John Sarbanes (MD-03), Jasmine Crockett (TX-30), Kevin Mullin (CA-15), Tony Cárdenas (CA-29), Brendan F. Boyle (PA-02), Joe Neguse (CO-02), Maxine Waters (CA-43), Haley Stevens (MI-11), Andre Carson (IN-07), Jimmy Gomez (CA-34), Bonnie Watson Coleman (NJ-12), Andrea Salinas (OR-06), Troy A. Carter, Sr. (LA-02), William R. Keating (MA-09), Jamaal Bowser (NY-16), Chellie Pingree (ME-01), Grace Meng (NY-06), and Adriano Espaillat (NY-13).**

The companion bill is co-led by **Senator Peter Welch (D-VT)**. Senate cosponsors include **Senators Ed Markey (D-MA), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), and John Fetterman (D-PA)**.

**Background on the *Closing the Meal Gap Act of 2023 (H.R. 3037)***

SNAP benefits are based on the restrictive Thrifty Food Plan, which inadequately calculates benefits for today’s low-wage workers and their families. SNAP benefits provide a mere \$2.03 per meal, and, according to the 2021 USDA Household Food Security report, the typical U.S. household spent 15% more on food than the cost of the Thrifty Food Plan. Because of this inadequacy, roughly 40% of all households participating in SNAP are still food insecure. The Closing the Meal Gap Act would help to address these issues by raising the baseline benefit for all SNAP households and allocating more funds to those with large medical and housing expenses.

Specifically, this bill would:

- Increase the baseline for SNAP benefits by incorporating the Low-Cost Food Plan into the SNAP formula, which would more accurately estimate how much working people spend on food.
- Eliminate eligibility limits & unrealistic barriers by:
- Authorizing the standard medical deduction in every state permanently for seniors and disabled individuals applying for SNAP benefits at a minimum of \$140. Individuals with high

expenses could continue to apply for a higher, itemized medical deduction.

- Eliminating the cap on the Excess Shelter Deduction in the SNAP formula to account for the cost of living for SNAP recipients in areas with high rent and utilities.
- Eliminating time limits on benefits for Americans struggling to find work.
- Expand benefits for and end discrimination against those who live and work in Puerto Rico by offering SNAP benefits as offered in the continental U.S.

The *Closing the Meal Gap Act* is endorsed by Hunger Free America, Save the Children, American Heart Association, MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, Food Research & Action Center, Feeding America, Center for Science in the Public Interest, Coalition for Food Security Puerto Rico, National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs, City Harvest, Carter Burden Network, Hunger Solutions NY, Met Council on Jewish Poverty, New York Vision Rehabilitation Center, VNS Health, NY StateWide Senior Action Council, Lifespan of Greater Rochester, FRAC, Share Our Strength, Association of Public Health Nutritionists, Community Food Advocates, Island Harvest, Long Island Cares, Inc.—The Harry Chapin Food Bank, Food Bank of the Southern Tier, Food Bank For New York City, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Feeding Westchester, Urban Outreach Center, National Education Association, WhyHunger, Broome Tioga BOCES, FeedMore WNY, Danone North America, Islamic Relief USA, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies (NJHSA), Bread for the World, National Women's Law Center, Loaves & Fishes/Friendship Trays, Inc., Carolina Farm Stewardship Association, FoodCorps, End Hunger Durham, Atlanta Community Food Bank, Hunger Free New Jersey, Virginia Poverty Law Center, Virginia Hunger Solutions, End Hunger CT, RESULTS, Food Bank of Central New York, D.C. Hunger Solutions, The Food Trust, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, and the National Council on Aging.

Adams is a champion on hunger and food security issues. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reports more than 34 million people, including 9 million children, are struggling with food insecurity in the United States. Due to the scope of the hunger crisis both locally and nationally, the Congresswoman [founded the Adams Hunger Initiative in 2015](#).

[Due in part to Rep. Adams' work](#), the average monthly SNAP benefit increased by 27 percent per person in 2021. Earlier this year, Congresswomen Adams and Barbara Lee [reintroduced the Improving Access to Nutrition Act](#), which seeks to lift the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program's (SNAP) three-month limit and ensure that all Americans have access to nutritious food and the ability to stay healthy in everyday life.

**Congresswoman Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.** represents North Carolina's 12th Congressional District (Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, Cabarrus County) and serves on the House Committee on Agriculture and the House Committee on Education & the Workforce, where she serves as ranking member of the Workforce Protections Subcommittee.

###

Sam Spencer  
Communications Director  
Congresswoman Alma S. Adams, NC-12  
2436 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515  
Phone: 202-225-1510 Fax: 202-225-1512

Office of Congresswoman Alma Adams | 10815 David Taylor Dr., Suite 100, Charlotte, NC  
28262 Phone: 704-344-9950

[Unsubscribe sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org](mailto:sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org)

[Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by [sam.spencer@mail.house.gov](mailto:sam.spencer@mail.house.gov)