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RELEASE: NC Congressional Democrats Call on USDA to Fund SNAP Benefits in November

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NC Congressional Democrats Call on USDA to Fund SNAP Benefits in November

WASHINGTON, DC—Today, North Carolina Representatives Alma S. Adams, Ph.D. (NC-12), Deborah Ross (NC-02), Valerie Foushee (NC-04), and Don Davis (NC-01) led a letter calling on U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Brooke Rollins to use "all available contingency funds and statutory transfer authority" to fund the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) through November.

On Friday, October 24, the USDA announced they would not administer SNAP benefits in November due to the government shutdown despite Congress having already allocated \$5-6 billion in SNAP contingency funds which the department can access for this purpose.

In the letter, lawmakers outlined the importance of SNAP and WIC, saying, "SNAP and WIC are among the most effective evidence-based programs our nation has to combat hunger and promote nutrition. They ensure low-income families, children, and older adults can access nutritious foods essential for their well-being. These programs not only reduce hunger but also yield measurable benefits for maternal and child health, improve birth outcomes, and lower long-term healthcare costs."

The letter highlighted how important food security programs are as grocery prices continue to rise in the United States: "The Consumer Price Index (CPI) shows that food-at-home prices remain significantly higher than pre-pandemic levels, rising faster than overall inflation and squeezing household budgets even further. Millions of Americans—especially those living paycheck to paycheck—cannot absorb a disruption to these critical programs."

Lawmakers emphasized that North Carolina households and families rely on these benefits to put food on the table: "In North Carolina alone, over 1.4 million residents rely on SNAP to help put food on the table each month. This includes more than 600,000 children, 159,000 older adults, and 46,000 veterans—individuals who have served our country and now depend on these benefits for basic sustenance. WIC, likewise, provides essential support for mothers, infants, and children, ensuring access to nutritious foods and health services that foster strong starts in life. In North Carolina, 49%, nearly half, of infants born in the state participate in WIC, and 237,656 women, infants, and children rely on the program each month."

In addition to food security, the letter stressed the economic impact of SNAP, especially to grocers and farmers: "In fiscal year 2024 alone, nearly \$3 billion in SNAP benefits and \$165.5 million in WIC benefits were redeemed at North Carolina retailers—an economic lifeline that sustains businesses and strengthens local economies... Many of the state farmers' markets accept SNAP and WIC benefits, enabling families to purchase fresh, locally grown produce directly from the producers. When these programs lapse or funding is delayed, the effects ripple through our rural communities: families lose access to nutritious food, and farmers lose a dependable source of income."

Lawmakers concluded by saying, "Given the urgency of the situation, we strongly urge the USDA to deploy all available contingency and reserve funds to continue SNAP and WIC operations in November and utilize statutory transfer authority to prevent any disruption in benefits during a government shutdown."

[The full letter can be found here.](#)

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