



REPORT CARD

United States House of Representatives
 Assignment: 2018 Farm Bill
 Name: Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018
 Topic Area: Food Access, Nutrition, and Public Health

FBLE Recommendation	Rating	Comments
 <p>Protect and Strengthen the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as our Nation's Most Vital and Successful Nutrition Assistance Program.</p>		H.R. 2 does not take any major steps forward in improving food security, food access, nutrition, or public health outcomes and instead makes detrimental changes to the SNAP program.
Maintain SNAP's current structure and ability to adapt to changes in economic conditions.		H.R. 2 expands harmful work requirements by requiring nondisabled adults 18-59 (an increased age threshold) to work at least 20 hours a week within a month of receiving SNAP (as opposed to the current 3 month structure). Able-bodied adults without dependents who cannot demonstrate they have met the work requirements every month will lose their benefits for a year or more.
Expand SNAP to address food insecurity and revitalize local economies.		The House bill tightens SNAP eligibility requirements participants by eliminating "broad-based" categorical eligibility and replacing it with a narrow categorical eligibility option. The bill also provides inadequate funding in order to support successful work and job training programs.
Improve SNAP access and efficiency through technology.		H.R. 2 prohibits grant funds from being used to improve access to benefits. Also, the bill requires all EBT transactions to go through a national mechanism, rather than the current third-party commercial processors, giving the federal government oversight and slowing the process for people reliant on these benefits.
Remove ineffective barriers to food access that impose a high administrative burden.		The bill requires monthly reporting for SNAP recipients, which would dramatically increase the burden on both recipients and state governments to meet staffing and data collection needs. By expanding barriers, recipients may lose their benefits and/or eligibility all together while some will not receive their benefits in a timely manner.
 <p>Improve Public Health and Increase Access to Healthy, Nutritious Foods, Especially for Vulnerable Populations and Rural Communities</p>		H.R. 2 misses opportunities to move programs forward that support healthy choices and otherwise address public health concerns. Instead, FBLE recommends that the farm bill bolster efforts to increase healthy food consumption.
Strengthen food assistance programs that promote healthy choices among SNAP participants.		H.R. 2 reauthorizes the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) program. The bill also extends the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP). However, under the House bill neither of these programs will receive mandatory funding, leaving them vulnerable to annual budgeting.
Identify and scale successful SNAP-Ed programs.		The House bill increases grants for state nutrition education programs by \$57 million in 2019. However, increasing funding without tangible ways to improve the program does little to improve outcomes. Further, the bill fails to provide adequate funding for program evaluation that would help identify and scale the most successful Snap-Ed programs.
Improve rural public health.		Sec. 608 of H.R. 2 allows the Secretary to temporarily reprioritize rural health assistance with certain rural development loan and grant applications in emergency situations to assist with health crises. However, aside from the Secretary announcing the health emergency and making temporary changes to assist, it is unclear how this will actually improve rural public health.
Improve health outcomes of low-income individuals living with serious diseases by establishing a Food is Medicine pilot.		The House bill misses an opportunity to include programs that would use targeted nutrition interventions to improve patient health.

 = Aligns with FBLE recommendations | Updated to reflect H.R. 2 as it passed the House on 6/21/18