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HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
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SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY
SUBCOMMITTEE
SPACE AND AERONAUTICS

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

December 5, 2024

The Honorable Andy Harris
Chair
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural
Development, Food and Drug Administration
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sanford Bishop
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural
Development, Food and Drug Administration
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Harris and Ranking Member Bishop,

As you work to finalize the FY25 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration Appropriations package, I respectfully urge you to include an extension of the authority for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit replacement. This authority, originally enacted through the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 (Public Law No: 117-328), allows states to use federal funds to replace SNAP benefits stolen from participants through card skimming, card cloning, and other similar methods. Without further congressional action, this critical authority will expire on December 20, 2024.

In November 2024, residents of the Fourth District of Virginia experienced a troubling increase in stolen SNAP benefits, with Richmond seeing a 2000% increase in reported cases of benefit theft.¹ SNAP families depend on these benefits to cover a significant portion of their monthly food budget, and losing them leads to devastating consequences. Many low-income households now face impossible choices between putting food on the table or paying essential bills. In some cases, parents skip meals to ensure their children have enough to eat.

Indeed, local food pantries and non-profit organizations reported a steep uptick in demand for food assistance within their communities.² While these organizations have stepped up to support their neighbors, they cannot address the crisis alone.

¹ <https://www.wtvr.com/news/local-news/snap-benefits-stolen-nov-15-2024>

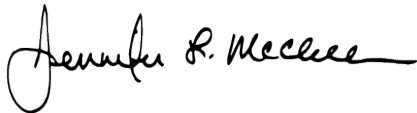
² <https://www.wtvr.com/news/local-news/snap-benefits-stolen-nov-15-2024>

As local and state entities work to investigate theft incidents and replenish funds, Congress must do its part and extend the authority for SNAP benefit replacement. Without this authority, families affected by theft and fraud later this month—and in the months to come—will be deprived of the assistance they deserve and face prolonged and unnecessary hardship.

Families in the Fourth District of Virginia and across the country deserve to approach the upcoming holiday season with hope, not the looming threat of food insecurity. We have the responsibility to act swiftly and ensure that vulnerable communities are not left behind.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer L. McClellan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress