



**Joint Legislative Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2027 Executive Budget Proposal:  
Human Services  
Thursday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

On behalf of Brighter Bites, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony about the Fiscal Year 2027 Executive Budget for Human Services.

Brighter Bites is a nonprofit that creates communities of health through fresh food with the goal of changing behavior among children and their families to achieve long-term health. Working in schools and community settings, Brighter Bites provides an evidence-based, multi-component program that offers ongoing access to fruits and vegetables, nutrition education, and consistent exposure to recipes and messages that feature fresh food. Brighter Bites stands apart from other food-focused organizations because our programs address food and nutrition security while contributing to behavioral changes that improve long-term health.

Since 2012, Brighter Bites has provided over 83 million pounds of produce and millions of nutrition education materials to children and families nationally. Brighter Bites expanded its innovative program model to New York City in the summer of 2017. In the intervening years, Brighter Bites NYC has delivered more than 6 million pounds of fruits and vegetables to over 38,000 families across 90 elementary school and summer camp locations. This school year, Brighter Bites NYC will distribute over 800,000 pounds of free, fresh fruits and vegetables directly into the hands of over nearly 4,000 New York City families.

However, recent federal action threatens this progress. Brighter Bites historically received approximately 40% of its national funding, including most of its New York City funding, through SNAP-Ed; the elimination of the program under H.R. 1 jeopardizes Brighter Bites' ability, alongside other community partners, to provide critical nutrition education and sustain proven, long-term health interventions for children and families.

Brighter Bites is not alone in facing this disruption. For more than 30 years, SNAP-Ed New York has built a statewide network of trusted community partners that help families stretch their food dollars and make healthier choices, of which Brighter Bites has been a

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proud and vital member for the past 7 years. Through this coalition of community-based organizations and State agencies, SNAP-Ed provides practical, evidence-based nutrition education and improves access to affordable, healthy food for New Yorkers of all ages

The resulting impact of the elimination of SNAP-Ed funding on New York State will be significant, weakening long-standing community partnerships, reducing access to proven nutrition education, and increasing pressure on already strained health and human service systems. State investment in SNAP-Ed is essential to prevent these losses and sustain effective, community-based nutrition education.

**To ensure the continuity of this proven and essential program, we urge the Legislature to prioritize a \$30 million investment to sustain nutrition services that help families stretch their SNAP benefits, improve health outcomes, and build long-term food security.** This funding level will fully support 17 community-based organizations and 3 State agencies responsible for delivering SNAP-Ed programming across New York State.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your continued attention to the critical needs of children and families across New York State.

Sincerely,

Amy Priebe  
Chief Operating Officer  
Brighter Bites

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