



Testimony of **The Health & Housing Consortium
Before the New York State Assembly and New York State Senate
Joint Legislative Public Hearing on the FY 2026-FY 2027 Executive Budget
Topic: Human Services**

February 9, 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on the FY 2026-2027 Executive Budget. **The Health & Housing Consortium** urges that Enacted Budget include a \$244 million investment to create a food benefit for New Yorkers who are ineligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) due solely to their immigration status, specifically focused on the 41,000 individuals who lost access to SNAP benefits under the federal spending bill House Resolution 1 (H.R. 1) and 65,000 immigrant households with children per the recommendation of the NYS Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council.

New York's Food Insecurity Crisis and the Impact on Immigrant New Yorkers

New York State is experiencing exceptionally high rates of food insecurity, following years of hits to the state's food system that have exacerbated the growing affordability crisis for families across the state. Over the last five years, New Yorkers have faced a pandemic that posed unprecedented and lasting challenges to our food system, exorbitantly high rates of inflation, and now, federal changes to SNAP that are shifting new costs to the State, imposing new work requirements, and further restricting eligibility for certain immigrant groups.

In 2023, 14.5% of New Yorkers reported food insecurity—meaning they sometimes or often didn't have enough to eat—compared to 10.7% in 2019. And roughly 1 in 5 New York children (19%) were food insecure in 2023. Food insecurity falls disproportionately along racial lines: 26% of Hispanic New Yorkers, 25% of Black New Yorkers, and 9% of white New Yorkers reported food insecurity.¹ Research published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine reveals another stark disparity: noncitizens are nearly twice as likely to be food-insecure as U.S.-born and naturalized citizens.² Food is a basic human right, and all New Yorkers deserve equal access to vital food assistance, regardless of their immigration status.

SNAP is the largest and most impactful anti-hunger program in the United States, providing nearly 3 million New Yorkers with an average benefit of \$6.89 per day in 2024.³ SNAP has been

¹ [Feeding America, Food Insecurity among the Overall Population in New York & Child Population in New York](#)

² [American Journal of Preventive Medicine, Food Insecurity Disparities Among Immigrants in the U.S.](#)

³ [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, A Closer Look at Who Benefits from SNAP](#)

proven to not only enhance food security but also improve health outcomes, stimulate local economies, and reduce poverty.

Yet despite contributing over \$27 billion per year in state and local taxes, many immigrant New Yorkers are unjustly excluded from SNAP benefits. Lawfully present noncitizens, including Green Card holders and domestic violence victims, face an arbitrary five-year waiting period before accessing SNAP benefits. Other groups are excluded entirely, including those with Temporary Protected Status, DACA, and undocumented status, which together comprise as many as 673,000 New Yorkers.

With the passage of H.R. 1, signed into law in July 2025, SNAP eligibility restrictions for immigrants became even stricter. Refugees, asylees, and humanitarian parolees are now excluded from the program, leaving thousands of New Yorkers without access to SNAP benefits. Implementation guidance⁴ issued in October 2025 directed states to immediately deny new applications from New Yorkers in these groups and remove current recipients at recertification.

SNAP4All New York and FY26-27 Budget Proposal

Given this food insecurity crisis, SNAP4All New York proposes using state funds to provide a food benefit to all income-eligible households currently ineligible for SNAP solely due to their immigration status. In the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-2027 Executive Budget, this program should begin its roll out by prioritizing two groups facing urgent food needs: 1) individuals who are newly ineligible for SNAP due to immigration status exclusions under H.R.1, and 2) households with children who are currently ineligible for SNAP due to their immigration status, as recommended in December 2024 by the New York State Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council (CPRAC).

Newly Excluded Immigrants

H.R. 1 stripped long-standing SNAP eligibility from refugees, asylees, humanitarian parolees, and others with longstanding humanitarian protections. This rollback will worsen food insecurity for thousands of immigrant New Yorkers, many of whom are fleeing situations of persecution, violence, human trafficking, climate disruption, and domestic violence. Given this emergency hunger crisis, the State must step up to prevent this change in eligibility from harming New Yorkers and their ability to afford food.

The Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA)'s most recent estimate is that 41,000 New Yorkers will be affected by this change, though this number could change as the full impact becomes clearer. This part of the proposal will cost approximately \$103 million per year in benefits to recipients based on average SNAP benefit costs.

Households with Children

The New York State Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council (CPRAC) in December 2024 recommended⁵ that New York State create a State food benefit for households with children who are ineligible for SNAP due to immigration status, as part of a pathway towards cutting child

⁴ [U.S.D.A., SNAP Implementation of the OBBB Act of 2025](#)

⁵ [Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council, 2024 Recommendations and Progress Report](#)

poverty by half by 2031. This crucial investment will ensure that New York families can put food on the table and that no child is left to face hunger.

According to the Urban Institute's modeling for CPRAC, establishing a State-funded food benefit for excluded families with children would reach nearly 65,000 New York households, providing each family with an average of \$2,169 in food assistance annually. CPRAC estimates that implementing this policy would cost up to \$141 million per year⁶.

Cost and Impact

Investing \$244 million in a food benefit for excluded New Yorkers isn't just a policy choice—it's an economic stimulus. This \$244 million investment would generate 3,323 direct jobs in the food and beverage retail sector and an additional 2,367 jobs through indirect effects, bringing the total of additional jobs created to 5,690, strengthening both local economies and the families they serve⁷. According to OTDA, SNAP use in New York supports the 18,000 retailers across the state who accept SNAP, including grocery stores, local shops, and the more than 400 SNAP-authorized farmers markets and farm stands, which can be found in every county. Impact evaluations have shown that New York City's Health Bucks program alone has led to more than 70% of farmers and vendors at NYC's greenmarkets reporting increased sales.⁸ According to Governor Kathy Hochul, the cuts to SNAP in H.R.1 will have double the impact to New York's farmers due to the state's farmers markets dollar matching program.⁹ The legislature has an opportunity to ensure these effects are not felt by our local businesses and farmers through expanding the federal SNAP program with state-funded assistance.

A full SNAP4All policy would ultimately include more than just these two groups, providing a food benefit for all income-eligible New Yorkers. **This program is laid out in S.9033 (Rivera) / A.6632 (González-Rojas).**

Momentum

There is growing momentum around the country for more equitable SNAP access. For example, in 2022, California expanded its state food assistance program to provide benefits for excluded Californians aged 55 and older. Illinois, Maine, Minnesota, and Washington have each implemented similar state-funded programs to provide food assistance for excluded immigrant households. Further, [110+ organizations](#) — including groups focused on health, food security, immigrant rights, and agriculture — have joined the SNAP4All New York Coalition, calling for a state-funded food benefit for all income-eligible households currently ineligible for SNAP due to citizenship status.

Local Impact

The Consortium works closely with NYC-based organizations serving households who rely on SNAP as a vital lifeline. Notably, as an organization primarily focused on improving access to

⁶ [Updated Employment Multipliers for the U.S. Economy, Economic Policy Institute, 2019.](#)

⁷ [Updated Employment Multipliers for the U.S. Economy, Economic Policy Institute, 2019.](#)

⁸ [Implementing a Farmers Market Incentive Program, 2013.](#)

⁹ [Governor Hochul Unveils Devastating Impacts of Republicans' 'Big Ugly Bill,' on New York State, 2025.](#)

housing and housing stability, we know that across demographics, access to food remains one of the highest needs and persistent challenges for immigrant and non-immigrant households alike. Providers consistently report that their clients are struggling to access food, particularly families facing language and immigration barriers. Recently, we connected one provider with a few local food resources, including mutual aid run weekly food distribution. Unfortunately, these options are inconsistent and operate during very limited hours, leaving immigrant families at risk of further instability.

New York State has a responsibility—and the necessary resources—to ensure that no New Yorker goes hungry, regardless of where they were born. At a time when the federal government is abandoning New York’s immigrant families, New York State must step up as a champion for all its community members—to ensure that immigrant New Yorkers can access the food they need to thrive. Investing \$244 million in a food benefit for excluded New Yorkers in the FY 26-27 Budget will ensure every New Yorker has the food they urgently need. Thank you.