

SNAP & Nutrition

Background:

In order for the United States to realize its full potential as a society, our people must have the benefits of good nutrition. The wealthiest nation on the earth should be properly fed.

Poverty is a leading cause of poor nutrition, and for decades the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (formerly called "food stamps") has been an important public-private partnership to serve families at or below 130 percent of the poverty line (about \$26,100 a year) or families with an elderly or disabled member. To be eligible, a family cannot have more than \$2,250 in assets (\$3,250 for those with an elderly or disabled member.) Current law excludes: strikers, certain legal immigrants, undocumented immigrants and college students, regardless of income. Most unemployed childless adults are limited to three months of benefits unless they are working at least 20 hours per week or are in a workfare or job training program.

SNAP caseload (and its total spending) increased as an important safety net to the 2008 recession, and a strong nutritional safety net must be in place to respond to any such future need.

For six years in a row, Republican budgets have proposed ending SNAP and converting the program into a block grant to the states. However, the Republicans forecast their block grants as declining significantly over the next ten years, leaving the states with primary responsibility to feed our people with declining federal funding.

Under the leadership of First Lady Michelle Obama, the federal government has also worked to improve the nutritional value of food that Americans consume. For example, federal school lunch programs were shifting to use whole grain breads and reduced sugar. However, as one of his first acts as Secretary Agriculture, Sonny Purdue reversed these reforms.

Therefore, be it resolved that: the 2017 Eighth Congressional District Democratic Convention:

- 1) Believes that this nation should make sufficient resources available to end hunger in the United States,
- 2) Opposes the conversion of SNAP into a block grant to the states. The federal agricultural program should include nutritional assistance as an integral part of its mission, and
- 3) Opposes steps that would attack nutritional education and the promotion of good eating habits by school children and by the population as a whole.