

End Hunger in Maine!

SNAP is a crucial safety net

Maine remains 3rd in the nation for hunger and rates of hunger and poverty continue to worsen in Maine relative to other states.

SNAP Facts:

- 43% of all SNAP recipients in Maine are children
- Every \$5 in SNAP benefits generates \$9 in the local economy.
- SNAP benefits pushed 4 million U.S. citizens above the official poverty line in 2012.

LR 612 An Act to Support Veterans Who Participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. In Maine, there is now a time limit on SNAP benefits for childless adults (18-49), who lose SNAP after three months unless they can find work, job training, or volunteer opportunities. Since Maine instituted the time limit in 2015, many thousands have lost access to SNAP. Since 1996, Congress has provided for discretionary exemptions from the time limit for one of the most vulnerable populations. During the annual “Point in Time” Survey of homelessness in 2016, 84 homeless veterans were documented. **This bill would exempt veterans from the SNAP 3-month time limit.**

LR 417 An Act to Eliminate Asset Tests for Individuals Applying for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Benefits: Previously Mainers at or below 185% of poverty were categorically eligible for SNAP without consideration of assets. Disqualifying assets now include any property (like a wood lot used for heating) other than a first house, most second cars, and any money in savings. Families with children are not subject to the asset test. Nearly all states have eliminated asset tests for seniors or people with disabilities, leaving Maine an extreme outlier among only four other states that still apply an asset test to this population. **This bill would allow Maine to join the vast majority of other states in eliminating the asset test for SNAP.**

LR 1764 An Act to Alleviate Hunger in Rural Maine in Areas of High Unemployment: Since 1996, the United States Department of Agriculture has allowed states to request a 3-month waiver for people in areas with an unemployment rate above 10 percent. Maine has always sought these waivers in rural areas of high unemployment where factories, paper mills, and fisheries downsized and/or shuttered their doors, in order to provide food assistance to workers struggling to find livable wage jobs. Beginning in 2015 Maine no longer asked for these waivers despite the many high unemployment areas in the state. As a result many thousands of Mainers have lost access to SNAP benefits, are experiencing hunger, and must rely on charity to survive. **This bill would eliminate the 3-month SNAP time limit in rural areas of high unemployment.**

LR 418 An Act to Provide Additional Assistance for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Receiving Food Supplement Program Benefits: Sixteen percent of seniors (9.6 million) across the United States face the threat of hunger. Since the recession in 2007 until 2013, the number of seniors experiencing hunger has increased by 56%, and according to the Pew Research Center, 10,000 Baby Boomers will turn 65 every day until 2030, which means tens of thousands of new seniors facing hunger every day. **This bill will provide an increase to the minimum SNAP benefit for the elderly (over the age of 60) and people with disabilities from \$16 per month to \$30 per month.** These bills are supported by:

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