

Legislation Text

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Calling on the United States Congress and the President of the United States to protect vulnerable citizens by funding the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and other federal food assistance programs as soon as possible.

WHEREAS, Over 40 million Americans are enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Many of those enrolled are families with children who depend on SNAP to feed their families every month; and

WHEREAS, The Federal Government has been shut down since December 22, 2018, with no sign of ending soon. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, which oversees SNAP at the federal level, is one of the agencies unfunded during the government shutdown; and

WHEREAS, According to the Department of Agriculture, previously appropriated funds are being carried over to meet the needs of the program. SNAP benefits have been sent out through February, however, if the shutdown persists much longer, funding is unlikely to be available for March; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, 2,500 retailers were unable to renew their licenses to accept SNAP payments because of the shutdown. Meaning that customers won't be able to use their SNAP benefits to purchase groceries in these stores; and

WHEREAS, Other food assistance programs are also in danger. Child nutrition programs, such as: School Lunch, School Breakfast, and the Child and Adult Feeding Programs are funded through February, but it is unclear what will happen after that. The Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations and the Special Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), however, have not been receiving federal funds at all during the shutdown; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia is the 10th hungriest city in America, with a poverty rate of 25.8% and a child poverty rate of 38%; and

WHEREAS, Approximately, 485,241 Philadelphia residents participate in SNAP, including 182,009 children, 69,144 seniors, and 72,821 persons with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, SNAP and other federal food assistance programs provide vital support to families in need and prevents the most vulnerable among us from going hungry. Even a slight delay in receiving these benefits can make a noticeable difference to the families that depend them; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL, Calls on the United States Congress and the President of the United States to protect vulnerable citizens by funding the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and other federal food assistance programs as soon as possible.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Chief Clerk will send a copy of this resolution to the offices our Representatives and Senators in the United States Congress and to the Office of the President of the United States.