

**To:** *Interested Parties*  
**From:** *Hart Research and New Bridge Strategy*  
**Date:** *June 14, 2023*  
**Re:** *New Poll on Americans' Opinions about SNAP*

A new national survey\* conducted by our firms on behalf of the Save the Children Action Network finds the American public strongly on board with doing more to aid families who are struggling to afford food. Indeed, the notion that some members of Congress could want to *cut* Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits provokes a quite negative response, and it does so across the partisan spectrum. This memorandum outlines the key findings from this survey.

**1) Voters are adamant that SNAP benefits are too low and should be increased.**

When asked to guess the amount the typical SNAP recipient receives per day, survey respondents estimate a median of \$20. When told that the typical family of four receives an average of \$5.70 per family member per day, 66% of voters say that that amount should be increased. The belief is held across partisan groups: 80% of Democrats, 63% of independents, and 53% of Republicans say benefits should be increased.

**2) Members of Congress who vote to cut SNAP benefits risk provoking negative feelings from the voting public, including key elements of the GOP base.**

Two in three (67%) voters say they would feel less favorable toward their Member of Congress if he/she voted to cut SNAP benefits. Again, this sentiment crosses partisan lines, with 81% of Democrats, 70% of independents, and 52% of Republicans saying they would feel less favorable. Key swing groups such as Latinos (63%) and suburban residents (67%) say they would feel less favorable, as do core elements of the Republican base, such as white non-college men (65%) and small town and rural residents (64%).

**3) Three factors help explain these strong responses: a pervasive feeling that food prices are a big problem; SNAP touching every stratum of the public; and a wide belief that SNAP is important to helping struggling families.**

Eighty-five percent (85%) of voters say that food and grocery prices are a big problem right now, including 58% who call them a *very* big problem. This makes food prices the most problematic

---

\* Online survey conducted May 31-June 3, 2023 among 1,010 registered voters nationwide. The survey's credibility interval, similar to a margin of error, is  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points.

day-to-day cost Americans are facing, a little ahead of the cost of housing (83%) and healthcare (82%) and well above gas prices (70%).

Likely related to this is the fact that fully half of voters nationally have some direct or indirect personal experience with SNAP—21% say someone in their household has received SNAP benefits at some point, and another 27% say this applies to someone they know outside of their household. At its lowest level, 28% of those with incomes over \$100,000 know someone who has received SNAP benefits; it rapidly increases as incomes decline, rising to 78% of voters with incomes under \$25,000.

Given all of this, it makes sense that 85% of voters say the government should be doing more to help families who are struggling afford food and groceries; this includes a majority of 52% who say the government should do *much* more. And the public clearly views SNAP as an important element of this—85% say that SNAP is very (61%) or pretty (23%) important when it comes to helping families pay for food when they are facing food insecurity. Three in four (74%) Republicans say SNAP is important, including 71% of Republicans who identify as very conservative.

**4) Beyond increasing benefit amounts, voters widely endorse several policy proposals that would strengthen and expand SNAP for recipients.** Large majorities favor everything from reducing paperwork for applicants to the Double Up Food Bucks program that encourages more purchasing of produce.

*% Who Favor Each of the Following SNAP-related Policies*

	Favor %
Continuing the program that matches the amount recipients spend on produce, which allows recipients to afford more fruits and vegetables in their budget	94
Allowing people more ways to apply for SNAP benefits--in person if they want to, so that they can talk to someone face to face, or over the phone if they do not have transportation to get to an office in person	87
Continuing the program that allows recipients to get nutritious foods for free with a prescription from their doctor or health insurance provider	83
Allowing a range of choices of products people can buy with SNAP benefits rather than only certain types of products	75
Reducing the government paperwork people have to go through in order to apply for SNAP benefits	70

---

As with the survey's other results, support for these policies crosses partisan lines, with majorities of Democrats, independents, and Republicans in favor of each. Indeed, even majorities of very conservative Republicans support nearly all of them (the paperwork item being the one exception—they are split on that one, 48% favor, 52% oppose).

**The Bottom Line:** A slowdown in inflation notwithstanding, a great many Americans continue to struggle with food prices—they know that food prices are a big problem. In such a setting, belief in the importance of the government helping those struggling with food insecurity takes on added importance—and, in fact, those efforts are deemed inadequate. If anything, voters want to see SNAP benefits *increased*, and efforts to do the opposite are sure to provoke a negative reaction.