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MDCEP
MARYLAND CENTER ON ECONOMIC POLICY

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The Big Ugly Bill Is Making Maryland Families Go Hungry

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the nation's most effective anti-hunger program and a critical lifeline for women and families across the country. In Maryland, SNAP helps about one in 9 households afford groceries each month. Women represent most adult SNAP participants, reflecting persistent gender disparities in income, caregiving, and poverty.

But the so-called "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" (OBBBA), enacted by President Trump and congressional Republicans in July 2025, made deep SNAP cuts that will disproportionately hurt women and families in Maryland and across the country—all to pay for massive new tax cuts for the billionaire class. Since this Big, Ugly Bill was enacted, more than 21,000 people in Maryland have already lost SNAP benefits. Unless our policymakers reverse course, many more Marylanders will go hungry in the months and years to come.

SNAP's Impact in Maryland

SNAP plays a critical role in supporting families across Maryland. Prior to OBBBA's cuts:

- An estimated 11% of Maryland households received SNAP benefits—that's nearly 694,000 people, including over 256,000 children.
- Nearly four in 10 SNAP households in Maryland (38%) included at least one child, and 17% had a non-elderly person with a disability.
- Nationwide, about two-thirds (67%) of SNAP households with children were headed by a single adult, most of whom were single moms.

SNAP makes a real difference for the people who receive it: SNAP participants report better health than their low-income peers who don't receive SNAP, and from 2015 to 2019, SNAP lifted an average of 80,000 people in Maryland above the poverty line each year. But OBBBA is putting this vital assistance at risk for families across the state.

How OBBBA Harms SNAP—And the People Who Depend on It

OBBBA makes the largest cut to SNAP in the program's history, slashing an estimated $186 billion over the next 10 years (about 20% of the program's total funding). To maintain SNAP participation rates, Maryland will have to increase SNAP's share of the state budget by 255%. If the state can't fill this gap, an estimated **81,000 Maryland households will see their SNAP benefits cut by at least $25 per month**; on average, these families will lose $150 in monthly benefits—and some are at risk of losing benefits entirely.

Here's how OBBBA shifts costs to states, restricts eligibility, and increases administrative burdens in ways that will increase hunger and hardship for Maryland families:

- **OBBBA makes states pay more for SNAP.** Beginning this year, states will have to pay a higher share of the administrative costs of running the program—and starting in 2027, for the first time, states will have to pay for a share of food benefits, too. Unless states like Maryland can find ways to raise millions in new revenues, they will be forced to offset these new costs by cutting other essential programs, restricting access to SNAP, or ending the SNAP program altogether.
- **OBBBA increases ineffective work reporting requirements that often force people off SNAP due to red tape, not ineligibility.** In the vast majority of SNAP households in Maryland, at least one person already works. Even before OBBBA, SNAP rules required most non-disabled adults ages 18 to 54 to prove that they were working at least 20 hours per week to remain eligible for the program; caregivers for children under 18 and certain other groups were exempt.
    - OBBBA expands these work reporting requirements to include older adults up to age 64 and caregivers for children age 14 and older. It also removes prior exemptions for veterans, youth who have aged out of foster care, and people experiencing homelessness.
    - **Research consistently shows that these work reporting rules do not increase employment or wages**—they simply cause people to lose food assistance.
    - These policies disproportionately harm women, especially women of color, because they take on the bulk of caregiving responsibilities in families and often work in low-paid jobs with unpredictable hours. Families may lose food assistance not because they are ineligible, but because they cannot navigate complicated administrative hurdles.
- **OBBBA eliminates SNAP eligibility for many lawfully present immigrants,** including refugees, people granted asylum, and certain survivors of domestic violence or sex trafficking.

Now, because of these cuts:

- **SNAP participation in Maryland fell by almost 6% between July 2025 and April 2026—and this number will only grow**.
- Food pantries can't keep up with demand as families lose the lifeline SNAP has provided.
- In Maryland, the Center for American Progress estimates that up to 600 avoidable deaths could result by 2040 from the work requirement expansions alone, as more people lose assistance and go hungry.

Policymakers Must Restore and Protect SNAP

Maryland families cannot afford any more cuts. To stop further harm, Congress must—at minimum—immediately delay the SNAP cost shifts to states and resist any efforts to make even more cuts and restrictions. While Maryland's state lawmakers should look to raise revenues from wealthy individuals and corporations to fill SNAP funding gaps rather than cutting vital programs, our federal policymakers ultimately must reverse OBBBA's SNAP cuts and ensure that billionaires and corporations pay their fair share, so we can invest in women, families, and our communities.