



7521 Main Street, Suite 103
Omaha, Nebraska 68127

(402) 597-3100
www.voicesforchildren.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michael Beverly, Jr., MBA
President

Danita Webb, Ed.D.
Vice President

Tim Hron, MA, LIMHP
Secretary

Gary Bren
Treasurer

Jill Batter, Esq.
Al Davis
Daniel Gutman, J.D.
Christina Kahler
Bruce Meyers
Emily Mwaja
Patty Pansing Brooks
Kimara Snipes
John Stalnaker, J.D.
Kate Noble Weitz
Lia Whitehead

Juliet Summers, J.D.
Executive Director

March 2, 2023

To: Chairperson Hansen and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee
From: Anahí Salazar, Policy Coordinator for Voices for Children in Nebraska
RE: Support for LB 84, change provisions relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

One of the most basic building blocks for children to properly develop is consistent access to nutritious food. Families working hard to make ends meet should not have to choose between a promotion at work and feeding their family. Voices for Children in Nebraska supports LB 84, which eliminates the sunset on SNAP eligibility at 165% FPL, because it will allow hardworking families to continue to feed their children as our country faces a potential recession.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is one of the most effective anti-poverty programs in the nation. It provides nutrition assistance to low-income individuals and families through benefits that can be used to purchase food at grocery stores, farmers markets, and other places where groceries are sold. SNAP is a temporary support that helps families and children; the average length of time households are on SNAP benefits is 12 months.

In 2020, SNAP moved about 7,176 Nebraska households above the poverty line of 100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL).¹ In order for a family to be eligible for SNAP with the current eligibility rate of 165% of the FPL a family of three needs to be making \$3,418 a month or \$41,019 a year.² In 2022, Nebraska had more than 73% of SNAP participants who were families with children, more than the national average.³ More than 30% of SNAP participants are families with member who are older adults or are disabled.⁴ If the eligibility criteria were to decrease down to 130% FPL, around 4,500 households would lose coverage.

Despite hard work, more and more Nebraska families are finding that their wages aren't keeping up with rising household expenses. Nebraska as well as the country are currently experiencing higher than normal cost of living adjustments. Inflation increased the pricing of food and shrinkflation has made food not last as long. The average SNAP household benefit for 2023 would be \$178 per household member per month. That amounts to about \$5.84 per household member per day.⁵ Those few extra dollars can mean the difference

¹ Kids Count Report 2022. *SNAP & WIC*.

² Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), *Poverty Guidelines*, available at: <https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines>

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, *Nebraska Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program*, February 13, 2023, available at: https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/snap_factsheet_nebraska.pdf

⁴ Id.

⁵ Id.

between a child going to sleep at night fed and ready to take on the next day, or struggling to sleep with an empty belly.

Addressing growing rates of food insecurity is critical to supporting families as they work to recover from the economic impact of the pandemic. We want to thank Senator Day for bringing this critical bill forward and the Committee for considering this important matter. We respectfully urge you to advance LB 84.