



President's Budget will Worsen Hunger in Montana and the Nation

Gayle Carlson, CEO, Montana Food Bank Network

"With nearly 140,000 Montanans living in homes that struggle with hunger, it is vital that we as a nation invest in strong hunger-relief and anti-poverty programs. Instead, the President's budget includes drastic cuts to the core of our social safety net. Even food and nutrition assistance is not spared, with a proposed cut of \$193 billion over ten years to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This loss could not be made up by the charitable food system, drastically worsening hunger in our state.

SNAP is our most important anti-hunger program, currently helping 120,000 Montanans keep food on the table and make ends meet every month. In Montana, more than 68% of SNAP participants are in families with children, 29% are in families with members who are elderly or have disabilities, and 44% are in working families.

The bulk of the cuts to SNAP in the President's budget are achieved by shifting a significant portion of the program's costs to the state, abandoning our decades-long commitment to address hunger as a national priority, ensuring that nutrition benefits are available to all who qualify. Shifting costs to the states places an unfair and unrealistic burden on state budgets. The result would inevitably be restrictions in eligibility and cuts to benefits as states attempt to bring costs down.

Instead of providing support and opportunity, these cuts will push low-income Americans farther down the economic ladder by tearing down the safety net that provides a path out of hunger and poverty. We in the emergency food system would not be able to fill in the gap created by the cuts proposed in this budget. Instead, we can expect to see increases in health care costs, decreased productivity in the workforce, and worse academic outcomes for the next generation. We urge Senators Daines and Tester to reject these devastating proposals and protect SNAP, Medicaid, and other poverty-reduction programs in the federal budget."

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The Montana Food Bank Network, located at 5625 Expressway in Missoula, secures and distributes donated and low cost food to nearly 150 hunger relief agencies throughout Montana. The Network works to meet the immediate need for food while advocating at the local, state, and national level for policy changes to help eliminate hunger and food insecurity in Montana. The Montana Food Bank Network is a member of Feeding America. For more information about the Montana Food Bank Network please visit www.mfbn.org.



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Our mission is to end hunger in Montana.