***[Today’s Date]***

Dear **[*Senator or Representative] [Last Name*]**:

I’d like to thank you for your continued support for all of Oklahoma and its citizens! No Oklahoman should go hungry and the most effective way to address hunger is to continue to strengthen and protect programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) against any cuts or changes in structure in the 2018 Farm Bill and beyond. Nutrition programs like SNAP help alleviate food insecurity for Oklahoma families, children, elderly, and disabled.

There are far too many people in Oklahoma struggling with food insecurity – around 632,030[[1]](#endnote-1) individuals and of which approximately 214,890[[2]](#endnote-2) are children. Many of these families are experiencing hunger because of the loss of a job, medical or family emergency, or temporary hardship. It is imperative that SNAP is there when they need it. SNAP is the first line of defense to fight food insecurity and currently helps put food on the table for over 598,722[[3]](#endnote-3) Oklahomans.

SNAP not only helps Oklahoma’s hungriest, but it helps bring our money back to our state. Every $1 spent in SNAP benefits puts $1.70 back into Oklahoma’s economy[[4]](#endnote-4) and, in 2016 alone, Oklahoma SNAP retailers redeemed about $866 million[[5]](#endnote-5) in SNAP benefits. It would be irresponsible to remove this crucial program that protects families, stimulates local economies, and supports Oklahoma’s farmers, ranchers, and businesses.

A recent research study[[6]](#endnote-6) showed that the less food secure a household is, the more likely they are to have a chronic illness while accruing higher healthcare costs. Oklahoma cannot afford these detrimental outcomes. If SNAP were to be weakened under the 2018 Farm Bill, many of our neighbors would be affected by increased food insecurity, worsened health outcomes[[7]](#endnote-7), reduced workforce productivity, and poorer educational outcomes[[8]](#endnote-8).

I urge you to vote, and encourage others to vote, to ensure SNAP is protected under the 2018 Farm Bill. Low-income families, the public, the economy, our schools, and our state are stronger when all residents in Oklahoma have access to the nutrition needed to live healthy and productive lives. Thank you for supporting Oklahoma’s families, farmers, and businesses.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

***[Your Name]***

***[Your Address]***

***[City, State ZIP]***

1. “Food Insecurity in Oklahoma.” Feeding America. <http://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2015/overall/Oklahoma?_ga=2.35489442.220049727.1516657817-1625245131.1510935723>. Accessed on February 6th, 2018. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. “Food Insecurity in Oklahoma.” Feeding America. <http://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2015/overall/Oklahoma?_ga=2.35489442.220049727.1516657817-1625245131.1510935723>. Accessed on February 6th, 2018. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. “Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Number of Persons Participating.” U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/pd/29SNAPcurrPP.pdf>. Accessed on February 6th, 2018. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. “Policy Basics: Introduction to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/policy-basics-introduction-to-the-supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>. Accessed on February 6th, 2018. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. “SNAP Is an Important Public-Private Partnership.” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. <https://www.cbpp.org/snap-is-an-important-public-private-partnership#Oklahoma>. Accessed on February 6th, 2018. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. “Food-Insecure Households Likelier to Have Chronic Diseases, Higher Health Costs.” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. <https://www.cbpp.org/blog/food-insecure-households-likelier-to-have-chronic-diseases-higher-health-costs>. Accessed on February 6th, 2018. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. “Food-Insecure Households Likelier to Have Chronic Diseases, Higher Health Costs.” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. <https://www.cbpp.org/blog/food-insecure-households-likelier-to-have-chronic-diseases-higher-health-costs>. Accessed on February 6th, 2018. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. “Research Brief: Breakfast for Learning.” Food Research and Action Center. <http://www.frac.org/wp-content/uploads/breakfastforlearning-1.pdf>. Accessed on February 6th, 2018. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)