
Raised Bill No. 415 an Act Concerning Appropriations for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Grants for Emergency and Community Food Sites.

Good morning Sen. Harris, Rep. Villano and members of the Human Services Committee. My name is Nancy Carrington and I am executive director of Connecticut Food Bank. CFB is a privately funded non-profit agency with the mission to alleviate hunger in Connecticut. CFB solicits donations from the food industry to distribute to charities that feed those in need. The type and quantity of those donations is highly unpredictable. CFB currently provides food to over 650 private charities which feed people in need.

Emergency feeding programs try to provide balanced nutritious meals to those they assist. In order to do this, it is necessary for programs to have nutritious and high protein foods. It is a continuous struggle for food bank donations to supply these high demand items. **The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides funds to the state's food banks (CFB and Foodshare) to purchase high quality food for distribution to local food pantries, soup kitchens and emergency shelters. These state dollars supplement private donations and feed people in need. Every dollar of SNAP funding is spent in the state of Connecticut – SNAP dollars increase business in Connecticut.**

Since it's inception in 1988, SNAP, as supplied by the general fund, has been virtually level funded at about \$400,000. **SNAP dollars were increased by 42% in the 2001-02 budget through \$200,000 specially allocated by the DSS commissioner. That same year the number of programs participating increased by 48%.** Although the commissioner has been able to continue to approve the extra \$200,000 to this point in time, the future is uncertain.

Due to the constantly rising cost of food, buying power has continuously declined since the inception of the program. This means the pounds of food bought with each dollar continues to decline. Fewer pounds mean fewer meals. In 1988 the starting \$409,046 bought 591,785 pounds of food. That food was distributed to 160 agencies across the state. On average each agency received 3,699 pounds of food. Today 466 agencies participate and receive on average 1,406 pounds.

Dividing the pounds of food purchased by the dollars spent gives a resulting "pounds of food per dollar" figure. In 1988 a dollar bought almost 1 ½ pounds of food. Today, a dollar buys 1 pound of food.

This year I ask for \$2 million dollars for SNAP funding. Other states fund like programs at much higher levels: Massachusetts \$12M, New York \$24.5M, New Jersey \$4M and Pennsylvania \$18.75M.

Over time more agencies are participating and the cost of food has gone up. The state's general fund dollars put into the program have not kept pace. The end result is that increasing need is not met. **In this wealthy state of CT people without means are going without meals to make ends meet and it is criminal. An increase in funding to \$2M for this very critical Nutrition Assistance Program is an investment in basic health and wellbeing of Connecticut's neediest neighbors. The need is urgent. How can we do less?**

Thank you for your attention.

Summary of SSNAP Disbributions

Fiscal Year	Number of Agencies	Percent Change	Pounds of Food	Pounds Per Agency	Percent Change	Dollars Spent	Pounds Per Dollar	Percent Change
1988-1989	160	N/A	591,785	3,699	N/A	\$ 409,046.62	1.45	N/A
1989-1990	172	7.50%	566,795	3,295	-10.90%	\$ 409,392.55	1.38	-4.30%
1990-1991	185	7.56%	534,756	2,891	-12.28%	\$ 409,651.35	1.31	-5.71%
1991-1992	209	12.97%	520,456	2,490	-13.85%	\$ 409,606.50	1.27	-2.66%
1992-1993	226	8.13%	544,681	2,410	-3.22%	\$ 411,489.58	1.32	4.18%
1993-1994	238	5.31%	513,546	2,158	-10.47%	\$ 410,975.35	1.25	-5.60%
1994-1995	239	0.42%	505,333	2,114	-2.01%	\$ 393,256.14	1.28	2.83%
1995-1996	227	-5.02%	511,741	2,254	6.62%	\$ 398,242.21	1.28	0.00%
1996-1997	231	1.76%	565,380	2,448	8.57%	\$ 409,687.99	1.38	7.40%
1997-1998	237	2.60%	534,845	2,257	-7.80%	\$ 419,443.89	1.28	-7.60%
1998-1999	244	2.95%	474,845	1,946	-13.77%	\$ 421,515.18	1.13	-11.65%
1999-2000	241	-1.23%	525,381	2,180	12.02%	\$ 430,246.00	1.22	8.40%
2000-2001	264	9.54%	536,607	2,033	-6.76%	\$ 448,959.00	1.20	-2.12%
2001-2002	391	48.11%	522,075	1,335	-34.31%	\$ 639,946.00	0.82	-31.74%
2002-2003	451	15.35%	742,067	1,645	23.23%	\$ 635,033.00	1.17	43.24%
2003-2004	495	9.76%	674,583	1,363	-17.17%	\$ 636,468.00	1.06	-9.30%
2004-2005	497	0.40%	682,064	1,372	0.70%	\$ 636,468.00	1.07	1.11%
2005-2006	463	-6.84%	649,521	1,403	2.22%	\$ 636,468.00	1.02	-4.77%
2006-2007	466	0.65%	655,312	1,406	0.24%	\$ 640,000.00	1.02	0.33%