

U.S. SENATOR BOB CASEY



CHAIRMAN Special Committee on Aging

The Senior Hunger Prevention Act of 2023

U.S. Senators Bob Casey (D-PA), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), and John Fetterman (D-PA)

Why do we need the Senior Hunger Prevention Act?

For many older adults, including grandparent and kinship caregivers, and adults with disabilities, access to federal nutrition assistance programs supports their ability to remain healthy and independent, while also improving their overall economic well-being. An estimated **5.2 million** older adults and **28 percent** of households with an adult who is out of the labor force because of a disability struggle to put enough food on the table. Programs administered through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), help to support households facing food insecurity by providing access to healthy food.

Many older adults, grandparent and kinship caregivers, and adults with disabilities are eligible for federal nutrition assistance programs. Yet, they often face preventable barriers to accessing critical nutritional benefits, which can result in significantly lower participation rates than other groups. In 2020, for example, less than half of eligible older adults and grandparent caregivers were enrolled in SNAP compared to nearly 80 percent of all eligible people. Confusion over eligibility criteria, complicated applications and limited enrollment periods, as well as transportation and mobility limitations are some of the barriers older adults, grandparent and kinship caregivers, and adults with disabilities face when trying to access nutrition assistance.

What will the Senior Hunger Prevention Act do?

The Senior Hunger Prevention Act would ensure older adults, grandparent and kinship caregivers, and adults with disabilities are able to access the food they need and stretch their budgets. Specifically, the bill will:

- Increase the minimum monthly SNAP benefit for all participants
- Simplify application and certification processes for eligible individuals in nutrition programs, including SNAP, and ensure they can stay enrolled in programs for longer periods of time
- Support outreach efforts to enroll more older adults, grandparent and kinship caregivers, and adults with disabilities in nutrition programs
- Enable adults with disabilities to participate in additional programs that provide shelf stable, supplemental food and fresh, locally sourced food
- Provide grants to non-profits, local aging and disability service providers, and related organizations to bring fresh, local food to accessible locations
- Expand SNAP food delivery options through public-private partnerships and strengthen retail delivery options for older adults and adults with disabilities

Original Cosponsors: Senator Blumenthal, Senator Kelly, Senator Warren

Supporting Organizations: The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, ADvancing States, Alliance to End Hunger, The American Public Health Association, Center for Science in the Public Interest, Central Pennsylvania Food Bank, Community Food Warehouse of Mercer County, Defeat Malnutrition Today, Feeding America, Feeding Pennsylvania, Food Research & Action Center, Generations United, The Gerontological Society of America, Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, Helping Harvest, H&J Weinberg Northeast Regional Food Bank, Justice in Aging, Meals on Wheels America, Meals on Wheels Association of Georgia, Meals on Wheels California, Meals on Wheels Pennsylvania, The National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs, The National Association of RSVP Directors, The National Council on Aging, The National Down Syndrome Congress, The Pennsylvania Association of Area Agencies on Aging, Philabundance, Philadelphia Corporation for Aging, Second Harvest Food Bank of the Lehigh Valley and Northeast Pennsylvania, Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania, Share our Strength, USAging, Westmoreland Food Bank