

Bipartisan Farm Bill Passes Congress After Years of Debate

Bill Provides Increased Opportunities to Reach Hungry Seniors

Alexandria, VA, February 4, 2014 – Today, the Senate passed [H.R. 2642, the Agriculture Act of 2014](#) by a bipartisan vote of 68 to 32. This legislation, commonly referred to as the “Farm Bill,” sets the national agricultural and nutrition policy for the next five years. Here is how these policies could impact America’s hungry seniors:

While this Farm Bill would cut our nation’s largest nutrition safety net, the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#) by \$8.6 billion over 10 years, the Association believes it represents the best compromise achievable. [The cuts](#) represent more than the Senate’s earlier proposal of \$4.1 billion in cuts, but are dramatically less than the House’s version of nearly \$40 billion.

On the whole, the Association remains optimistic about other elements of the bill that could enable Senior Nutrition Programs and partners to reach more seniors in need, as well as maintaining vital programs that have been essential in the fight against senior hunger in America.

For low-income seniors utilizing SNAP, a bipartisan provision would allow the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to establish 20 pilot programs to deliver groceries to homebound and disabled individuals who might not otherwise be able to utilize their benefits. We believe this provision will allow our Members and partner organizations to reach more hungry seniors, and we look forward to working together to implement these pilots to have greater impact.

The [Commodity Supplemental Food Program \(CSFP\)](#), which currently delivers nutritious food boxes to low-income seniors, women and children, would have the authorization to expand services in six additional states, bringing the total to 45. Given that 97% of program participants are seniors, the Farm Bill clarifies that the program be only for seniors over the age of 60 going forward. However, it allows any household currently on the program to remain for as long as the current eligibility requirements continue to be met.

The Association is also pleased to see that the [Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program](#), which provides fresh, local produce to America’s seniors, remained untouched.

To join the Association’s advocacy efforts, visit mowaa.org/becomeanadvocate.

About Meals On Wheels Association of America

The Meals On Wheels Association of America is the only national organization and network dedicated solely to addressing senior hunger in America. The Association is the oldest and largest organization composed of and representing local, community-based Senior Nutrition Programs in all 50 states and the U.S. territories. More than 5,000 local Meals on Wheels Programs leverage a dedicated army of two million volunteers who day-in and day-out create an efficient and caring way to help America’s seniors stay independent, healthy and able to live in their own homes. For more information, or to locate a local Meals on Wheels program, visit mowaa.org.