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June 24, 2026

The Honorable Tim Walberg
Chair
Committee on Education and Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Walberg:

This Committee has often been afforded the opportunity to hear from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA or the Department) to discuss the Administration's budget proposal for child nutrition programs or other matters within the Committee's jurisdiction.¹ The last time Members of this Committee had this opportunity was in 2022 when Administrator Cindy Long came before us to discuss the Biden Administration's priorities for federal child nutrition programs.² Since House Republicans took the gavel in 2023, we have not held a single hearing³ on the Administration's budget proposal for these programs despite having jurisdiction over several child nutrition programs administered by the Department.⁴ These programs include but are not limited to the National School Lunch Program (NSLP); the School Breakfast Program (SBP); the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP); the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) program; and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The Committee has a responsibility to conduct

¹ See, e.g., Examining the Policies and Priorities of the U.S. Dep't of Agric. Food and Nutrition Serv.: Hearing Before Subcomm. on Civil Rts. and Hum. Serv. of the Comm. on Educ. and Wrkf., 116th Cong. (2019), <https://democrats-edworkforce.house.gov/hearings/examining-the-policies-and-priorities-of-the-us-department-of-agricultures-food-and-nutrition-service>; Examining the Policies and Priorities of the U.S. Dep't of Agric. Food and Nutrition Serv.: Hearing Before Subcomm. on Civil Rts. and Hum. Serv. of the Comm. on Educ. and Wrkf., 117th Cong. (2022), <https://democrats-edworkforce.house.gov/hearings/06/16/2022/examining-the-policies-and-priorities-of-the-us-department-of-agricultures-food-and-nutrition-service>.

² *Id.*

³ Educ. & Wrkf. Comm Democrats, Hearings & Events, <https://democrats-edworkforce.house.gov/hearings-and-events>.

⁴The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, Pub. L. No. 79-396, 60 Stat. (1946) (codified in scattered sections of 7 U.S.C.); Child Nutrition Act of 1966, Pub. L. No. 89-642, 80 Stat. (1966) (codified in scattered sections of 7 U.S.C.).

oversight regarding these programs, especially considering the Administration's efforts to limit access to nutrition programs that millions of families depend on to make ends meet.⁵

Nutrition programs are a fundamental lifeline for families across the country; more than 21 million children receive free and reduced price meals while in school and an expected 21 million children will receive grocery benefits this summer.⁶ However, as food and labor costs continue to rise,⁷ current meal reimbursement rates have not kept up with the cost of producing meals. Families across the country are facing an affordability crisis, and now they are seeing increased barriers to accessing critical assistance programs. Since the "Big, Ugly Bill" was signed into law in July 2025, there has been a drastic decline in the number of children receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits with more than 700,000 children no longer participating in the program.⁸ Eligibility for Medicaid or SNAP, as well as certain other programs, allows millions of low-income students to seamlessly access free and/or reduced price school meals without the need for their families to complete a school meals application. As a result of the eligibility changes in the "Big, Ugly Bill" that limit participation in SNAP or Medicaid, participation in other nutrition programs has also been directly impacted.

There are several other harmful administrative actions that warrant congressional oversight. Throughout the past year, the Administration has suspended critical grants and programs over supposed noncompliance with executive orders⁹ assailing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility policies.¹⁰ Additionally, the Administration proposed cutting several nutrition programs that support both families and farmers in their Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 budget proposal.¹¹ These programs include the Patrick Leahy Farm to School Program, the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Equipment Assistance Grant, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). The proposed cuts not only contradict the Administration's "Make America Healthy Again" agenda, but they do nothing to help families

⁵ Sara N. Bleich, Cindy W. Leung, Rita Hamad, *Implications of Recent Federal Actions on Food Assistance Programs*, JAMA Health Forum (Apr. 10, 2025), <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama-health-forum/fullarticle/2832861>.

⁶ National School Lunch Program: Participation And Lunches Served, U.S. Dep't of Agric. (Apr. 10, 2026), <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/slsummar-4.pdf>; Press Release, Food Rsch. Action Ctr., More Than 21 Million Children in 38 States, District of Columbia, to Benefit from Summer EBT in 2026 (Jan. 9, 2026), <https://frac.org/news/summerebtjan2026>.

⁷ *School Nutrition Trends Report SY 2025-26*, Sch. Nutrition Ass'n (Jan. 2026), <https://schoolnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/SY-25-26-School-Nutrition-Trends-Report.pdf>.

⁸ Luis Nunez, *Sharp Drop in Number of Children Receiving SNAP Food Assistance Under New Federal Law, Ctr. On Budget and Pol'y Priorities* (May 27, 2026), <https://www.cbpp.org/blog/sharp-drop-in-number-of-children-receiving-snap-food-assistance-under-new-federal-law>.

⁹ Exec. Order No. 14151, 90 F.R. 8339 (2025); Exec. Order No. 14173, 90 F.R. 8633 (2025); Exec. Order No. 14168, 90 F.R. 8615 (2025).

¹⁰ *USDA Halts FY25 Patrick Leahy Farm to School Grants*, Sch. Nutrition Ass'n (Mar. 25, 2025), <https://schoolnutrition.org/sna-news/usda-halts-fy25-patrick-leahy-farm-to-school-grants/>.

¹¹ *2027 USDA Explanatory Notes*, U.S. Dep't of Agric., <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/FY-2027-Chapter-34-FNS.pdf> (last visited May 27, 2026).

now faced with an affordability crisis that has been worsened by the devastating cuts in the “Big, Ugly Bill.”¹²

Most recently, on top of a Department-wide reorganization, Secretary Rollins recently announced plans to convert the Department’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) into the “Food and Nutrition Administration” and relocate staff from Washington, DC, and regional offices to alternate locations across the country.¹³ While the Committee on Agriculture had both a public hearing with the Secretary¹⁴ and a roundtable where Members had the opportunity to ask the Deputy Secretary of Agriculture about the reorganization, Members of this Committee have not been afforded any such opportunity.¹⁵ The opportunity to hear from the Department is critical as its own analysis of more than 14,000 public comments that were submitted last year during the comment period for the Department-wide reorganization revealed widespread concern over the reorganization.¹⁶ The loss of experienced staff after the 2019 relocation¹⁷ of research staff under the first Trump Administration compounds these concerns. This comes on top of the dismissal of probationary employees, deferred resignations, and early retirement offers under this Administration, which has already led to the loss of nearly 30 percent of the workforce at FNS.¹⁸

¹² Education Workforce Democrats, Republicans’ “Big Ugly Law” Limits Access to Free School Meals to Give Tax Breaks to Billionaires and Corporations (July 4, 2025), https://democrats-edworkforce.house.gov/imo/media/doc/republicans_tax_law_limits_access_to_school_meals2.pdf.

¹³ The Supplemental Nutrition and Safety Programs team, which administers WIC, will be relocated to Kansas City, MO, while the Child Nutrition Programs team will be relocated to Dallas, TX. U.S. Dep’t of Agric., Press Release No. 0062.26, USDA Announces Actions to Better Serve States, Nutrition Program Recipients, and the American Taxpayer (Apr. 30, 2026), <https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2026/04/30/usda-announces-actions-better-serve-states-nutrition-program-recipients-and-american-taxpayer>.

¹⁴ For the Purpose of Receiving Testimony from the Hon. Brooke L. Rollins, Sec’y, U.S. Dep’t of Agric.: Hearing Before Comm. on Agric., 119th Cong. (2026), <https://agriculture.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=8144>.

¹⁵ Marcia Brown, *Vaden to Hold Roundtable with House Lawmakers on USDA Reorganization*, PoliticoPro (May 11, 2026), <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/2026/05/vaden-to-hold-roundtable-with-house-lawmakers-on-usda-reorganization-00914090>; Letter from the Hon. Stephen Alexander Vaden Scott, Dep. Sec’y, Dep’t of Agric., to Rep. Robert C. “Bobby” Scott, Ranking Member, U.S. House Comm. on Educ. and Wrkf. (June 3, 2026) (on file with Committee staff).

¹⁶ More than 80 percent of comments submitted to USDA during the comment period for the Department-wide organization “expressed negative sentiment” toward the reorganization, as many of the respondents had concerns over the loss of local oversight and expertise, reduced personnel and resources, and a lack of transparency in the reorganization process. U.S. Dep’t of Agric., USDA Reorganization: Summary and Analysis of Feedback (Dec. 8, 2025), <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/usda-reorg-comments-analysis-12082025.pdf?emci=02f7d369-0efe-f011-832f-000d3a1f0e4c&emdi=35b94a56-1ffe-f011-832f-000d3a1f0e4c&ceid=5017366>.

¹⁷ In 2019, staff of two research agencies—the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and the Economic Research Service (ERS)—were relocated from Washington, DC, to Kansas City, Missouri. Genevieve K. Croft. Cong. Rsch. Serv., IFI 1527, Relocation of the USDA Research Agencies: NIFA and ERS (2020), https://www.congress.gov/crs_external_products/IF/PDF/IFI1527/IFI1527.3.pdf.

¹⁸ U.S. Off. of Personnel Mgmt., Workforce Size & Composition (Mar. 2026), <https://data.opm.gov/explore-data/analytics/workforce-size-and-composition>; Press Release, Nat’l WIC Assoc., National WIC Association Opposes USDA Reorganization Plan, Warns of Risk to WIC Operations and Families (Apr. 30, 2026),

The Honorable Tim Walberg

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Respectfully, we ask that you coordinate with minority Committee staff to schedule a hearing to allow Members on both sides of the aisle to discuss the Administration's priorities and conduct oversight of actions taken by the Administration. This is a critical opportunity to consider the implications of these changes for families across the country. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress
Ranking Member, Committee
on Education and Workforce



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Mark Takano
Member of Congress




Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



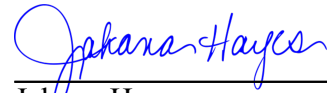
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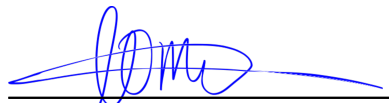
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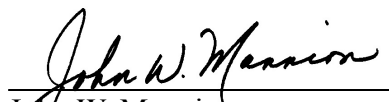
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