

# ISSUE BRIEF

## Hot Foods Act of 2025

### BACKGROUND

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the most successful anti-hunger program in America's history.

Currently, SNAP rules do not allow benefits to be used on hot prepared foods like sandwiches, cooked chicken, and more. When SNAP was becoming the program we now know, most families were preparing more meals at home from scratch, so Congress restricted SNAP dollars. Over the last 50 years, family eating habits have evolved, yet SNAP's rigid rules that prohibit the purchase of prepared meals from stores keep people from the convenience of feeding themselves faster while they juggle various activities and responsibilities. The current rules do not take into account families headed by people who work multiple jobs and are not home to prepare meals, people experiencing homelessness who do not have access to cooking appliances, and the societal shift way from protected meal times.

While most Americans enjoy the flexibility to purchase a mix of hot prepared meals like rotisserie chicken, hot sandwiches, and soups, the more than 38 million SNAP participants are restricted from doing so. According to the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 88 percent of all SNAP participants are children, older adults, and individuals with a disability.

At a time when SNAP is experiencing historic cuts that will alter the lives of the Programs' participants from now on, Congress has a responsibility to those who remain able to access the program to ensure that it works for the most people.

### LEGISLATIVE SOLUTION

Support the Hot Foods Act of 2025 (S. 1202/H.R. 2512)

NASW urges Members of Congress to advance The Hot Foods Act of 2025 (S. 1202/H.R.2512). This legislation would allow Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to be used on ready-to-eat hot foods.

This legislation was introduced in a bipartisan and bicameral manner by:

- » Rep. Grace Meng (D-NY-06)
- » Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01)
- » Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO)

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