

National Webinar Summary

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http://www.results.org/skills_center/results_national_conference_calls/

Welcome and Conversation with Expert on Poverty

Meredith Dodson, Director of U.S. Poverty Campaigns
Yolanda Gordon, For Mill, SC

Welcome to the May 2018 U.S. Poverty National Webinar

- This is an urgent time for us to be in action, with big threats to SNAP
- To get us started, we wanted to hear from someone who understands this issue closely – one of our Experts on Poverty Yolanda Gordon
 - Yolanda, you have both received and advocated for SNAP. From your experience, what does SNAP mean to you?
 - Hello this is Yolanda Gordon from SC
 - SNAP benefits and safety net programs were instrumental in helping me graduate from college and feed kids
 - New proposal is crushing blow for families
 - \$19 billion in cuts and harsh new work requirements will make it harder for families to get food they need
 - We need to continue to engage Congress to talk to people who are impacted by these cuts
 - Need to get to politicians that tout “family values”; while they sit and contemplate cutting these benefits, they need to know that they are affecting families who are decimated by their decisions
 - Cost of living is rising and wages are stagnant; families are suffering
 - There are many people like myself where the return on investment for SNAP benefits; my voice doesn’t get acknowledged
 - Seek out voices who receive these benefits; special interest groups and think tanks should not be making these decisions
 - After passing tax cut for wealthy, Congress needs to protect individuals who need these benefits
 - We know that the House is proposing harmful changes to SNAP in the new Farm Bill (which we’ll discuss in more detail on this webinar). Instead of Congress

working to force people off SNAP, what would you like to see Congress do to strengthen SNAP?

- Yolanda got cut off from the webinar; her answer is below

Guest Speaker: Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (D-CT-3)

Jos G. Linn, Grassroots Manager for U.S. Poverty Campaigns

- **Bio**

- Represents Connecticut's 3rd District
- First elected to Congress in 1990
- Ranking Member of the House Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee, which oversees funding for Head Start, child care, WIC, the Affordable Care Act, and other important programs
- Fierce anti-poverty champion, working to protecting the interests of low-income individuals, children, and families
- Has fought for Medicaid, SNAP, early childhood, child nutrition, and the EITC and CTC for many years

- **What's at stake with the new Farm Bill?**

- Thank you to everyone at RESULTS
 - Delighted to be invited on the call
 - We're talking about a critical issue
 - We (Congress) work in circumstances where rich and powerful are often the only voices ever heard in DC
 - People in poverty and hunger and often ignored, but that's where you come in
 - You push the political process to make it respond to those least fortunate and most vulnerable
 - Happy to work with you
 - We need you now more than ever
- House Farm Bill passed on party line vote in April
 - My personal views it that this is a betrayal of working families and our most vulnerable
 - Going to impose onerous requirements on millions of people on SNAP

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- Cut the program by more than \$23 billion (this is the overall cut in food assistance but there is a bump in benefits for some people (which is good) which adds \$4 billion back in, so a net cut of \$19 billion)
- We are a nation of plenty, have an abundance of food
 - We ought to work to eradicate hunger, not eradicate anti-hunger programs
 - So often, there are so many families who don't know where their next meal is coming from
- I did an event in Hamden, CT today, where United Way has partnered with AmeriCorps/VISTA program to distribute food to kids who are most needy
 - They do this because they know it's a problem
 - Working together to get food to the neediest people
- I don't buy "food insecurity" as a term; these are people who are hungry
 - 1 in 7 people in CT-3 don't know where their next meal is coming from
- SNAP is essential
 - Helps people from going hungry; helped more than 44 million Americans in 2016, including more than 35,000 families in CT's 3rd District
 - We know that SNAP works, each month it helps families with 20 million children afford an adequate diet
 - 1 in 4 kids in the US
 - 1 in 8 people in CT rely on SNAP
 - Half of CT SNAP recipients are families with kids
 - For every dollar in benefits, 91 cents go to families at or below the poverty line
 - Half of benefits go to households in the deepest poverty and over 70 percent of benefits go to household with kids

Briefly lost Rep. DeLauro so went back to Yolanda Gordon

What would you like to see Congress do regarding SNAP?

- *Instead of cutting SNAP, we need to increase SNAP benefits so it's more than \$1.40 per meal so they have enough to eat*
- If they are imposing work requirements, they should count volunteer hours because many people, while looking for work, also volunteer in different areas and not getting recognition for it

Rep. DeLauro returns

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- If Republicans were serious about reforming the Farm Bill, they would limit agricultural subsidies for crop insurance, which has no eligibility caps and no payment limits
 - The SNAP changes are based on what Paul Ryan and President Trump think of people in poverty – if you make getting assistance onerous enough and humiliating enough, people will opt out voluntarily
 - We are the richest nation on Earth, people should not be going hungry in this country
 - SNAP has had bipartisan support for decades because leaders recognized a moral obligation to combat hunger
 - Instead, we have Paul Ryan and President Trump who rushed through a \$2 trillion tax cut, going mostly to the wealthy and corporations
- Thank you to all of you for being active and drawing attention to this issue
 - There is nothing more powerful than people hearing directly from folks who are in this struggle
 - Congress is an institution that responds to external pressure
 - Make as much noise as you can and say enough is enough
 - We must stand together to protect our neediest families and our kids
 - We in this together; we're not going to allow them to do this
- **What is the timing on the House Farm Bill?**
 - We have to move quickly
 - Chair of House Agriculture Committee (Mike Conaway, R-TX-11) wants to get this done before the end of May
 - We need to get people all over the country making calls, writing, and making their voices heard
 - House leaders must understand that they do not have the votes at this point
 - Go to members' offices this week and tell them you want to talk about this; they need to know they are electorally at risk if they go down this road
 - Meredith: Vote could be the week of May 14
- **Betsy Skipp (Miami, FL): I'm a guardian ad litem so I represent kids in the foster system (CASA Program). How do we push lawmakers to push SNAP and other nutrition issues for these kids?**
 - They are at great risk
 - Members of Congress need to hear from you about this, bring a group of people who are impacted by these changes

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- What happens to these kids? Are lawmakers going to simply cut them off?
 - Meredith: Important to note that the House is putting in work requirements that for the first time require parents to comply (parents of kids 6 and above).
 - Rep. DeLauro: In 2014 Farm Bill, we put together a SNAP Work Training Program but results are not due back for another year to see if this even works. They are bypassing that effort.
 - If they do what they want to do with these work requirements, you are leaving millions of people at great risk.
 - People who can work already are working
 - Leaving kids who are 6 at home alone? What are we talking about here?
 - Plus, we simply do not have the funds to train all the people who need it nor the jobs to employ them. If there are no jobs available, what happens to these folks?
- **Marty Karnopp and Jim Chaput (Aurora, CO): Will any Republican's vote no on the House Farm Bill?**
 - I have to believe there are a number of Republicans who would vote no
 - Need to identify the lawmakers we can move on this issue and pressure them with calls, visits, etc. (RESULTS will share our target list when we have it)
- Thank you having me. In the 2008 Farm Bill, they told us we would not get to index benefits to inflation, that we couldn't loosen the asset limits to capture more people, we wouldn't be able to increase benefits, but we beat them back in 2008 and we can do it again

Policy Summary and Recess Action

Action right now (including this recess!) is key:

- House Farm Bill vote could happen as soon as next week or the week after, could take food away from millions who are at risk of hunger
 - 2 million lose basic food assistance
 - Feeding America: SNAP Meals Lost (net): 9.8 billion (slide)
- Senators are writing their own bipartisan bill.
- Harmful cuts and changes to SNAP would make it harder for working families – including people of color and persons with disabilities – to put food on the table
- Recess: get face-to-face with members, raise this at town halls! Tailor our talking points for letters, calls with Congressional aides, or face-to-face meetings Congress telling

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them to oppose any efforts to cut or change SNAP that would lead to greater hunger in the U.S.

- o And media attention, especially while Congress is home and reading the local paper, is key

Overview of May Action and Media Tips

Colin Smith, Director of Communications

May Action: http://www.results.org/take_action/may_2018_u.s._poverty_action

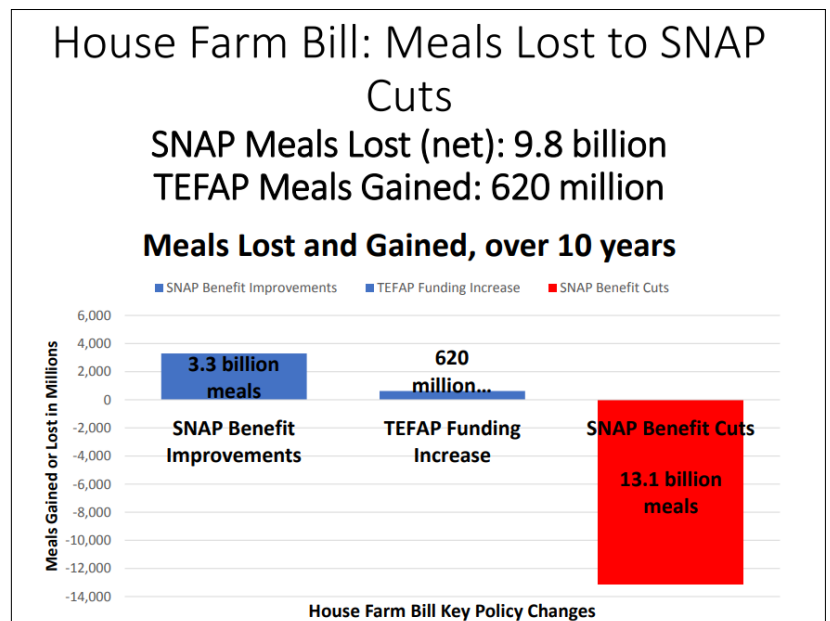
You know that old saying, “when you’re hungry, everything is easier”? No one does. Unfortunately, that’s the premise of the new Farm Bill – the *Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018* (H.R. 2) – that will be voted on in the House in early May. By cutting access to SNAP, this bill would make it harder for more than a million low-income households to put food on the table.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP – what we used to call “Food Stamps” – is our country’s first line of defense against hunger. It helps over 40 million people per month put food on the table. Most of them children, persons with disabilities, and seniors. But the House Farm Bill proposes a slew of destructive policy changes, with harsh new requirements to access the program and draconian penalties.

Harmful. The bill cuts food assistance to nearly every type of SNAP participant, including: children and their parents, people with disabilities, older workers, and people who are working or in between jobs. It is estimated that [2 million people](#) will lose all or part of their SNAP benefits over the next ten years. This means that SNAP will serve nearly *10 billion fewer meals* over that time (Feeding America). It also rolls back decades of bipartisan effort to make SNAP more accessible, especially to workers.

Unworkable. The bill uses the \$20 billion in SNAP cuts to create a huge new bureaucracy for states to supposedly help people find work. However, this investment is a fraction of what is needed, meaning it will fail to help people get jobs while guaranteeing they lose food assistance.

Untested. The 2014 Farm Bill set up state pilot programs to test the efficiency of work requirements in SNAP, but the results from those programs are not yet available. Instead of waiting to make policy based on fact, the House is plowing forward on a program that has no track record of success.



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Wasteful. The House Farm Bill forces people into work programs they may not need and places onerous reporting requirements on them and the states. SNAP participants will be required to report their work status *every month* and if they fail to do so, they would lose benefits for *one to three years*.

Thank you to the [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#) and [Feeding America](#) for the information above.

We can all agree that helping more people make ends meet and find quality jobs is a good thing. But this bill won't do that. It winds up taking food assistance away from people who need it. That's bad policy, and just plain wrong.

Send a letter to the editor to your local paper urging your member of Congress to vote against the House Farm Bill

Remember, the best letters are the ones that come straight from the heart. But you can [use our template to get you started](#).

To the editor:

As millions of families are just scraping by, now leaders in Congress are debating a bill that would take away food from people struggling to find work.

The new House Farm Bill undermines SNAP (what we used to call "Food Stamps") through a series of harsh new requirements and changes to who's eligible for the program. Cutting people off from access to food does one thing and one thing only – it leaves them hungry. Congress needs to know that their so-called "work requirements" won't create jobs. They will just cause harm.

We should not break the long history of bipartisan commitment to ensure struggling families across the country have enough to eat. Strengthening SNAP, not cutting it, is the right way forward. I urge our members of Congress need to say "no" to this Farm Bill.

[Your name]

Here are some tips to improve your chances of getting published.

- **Make it personal.** Members of Congress aren't looking for form letters — they're looking to really hear from their constituents. That's you! Make sure you tell them *why* you care. If you have personal experience with SNAP, make sure to include that.
- **Make it local.** Remind Congress that SNAP matters to the people who voted them into office. [Include local data](#). And don't forget to mention your member of Congress by name.
- **Make it timely.** Show the newspaper editor that this is urgent: reference a recent story on the Farm Bill, or call out that Congress could be voting as soon as the beginning of May. This can't wait around.

- **Make sure you submit it.** The #1 reason someone's letter to the editor doesn't get published? They never submit it. Hitting "send" is the scariest part of publishing a letter – but it's by far the most important.

May Action Resources

- Read the **May Action Sheet** at: http://www.results.org/take_action/may_2018_u.s._poverty_action
- **Add [local data](#)** on SNAP in your state
- Use our **online LTE template** at: <http://www.results.org/take-action/action-center?vvsrc=%2fcampaigns%2f54070%2frespond>
- **Try writing a longer op-ed [using our editable template](#)**
- New to media work? Here are **guides to get started**:
 - Letters to the Editor: http://www.results.org/skills_center/advocacy_how_tos/working_with_the_media/milestone_18
 - Op-eds: http://www.results.org/skills_center/advocacy_how_tos/working_with_the_media/milestone_19
 - Editorials: http://www.results.org/skills_center/working_with_the_media/working_with_the_media_milestone_20
 - [Learn all the details](#) on **how this Farm Bill would take food away** from people who are struggling.

Grassroots Shares

Jos Linn, Grassroots Manager for U.S. Poverty Campaigns

- **Bill Baker and Lucinda Winslow of RESULTS Coastal Connecticut**
 - Our group set an intention to do outreach in our area and grow our membership
 - We've had 3 outreach events in first 4 months of the year
 - We did advocacy training for Undoing Racism locally and as a result, they decided to do one RESULTS action per month
 - We got 1 new active member from this and we are averaging about 12 people at our monthly UR meeting who are taking action (usually calls)
 - We did 2 advocacy trainings at Sacred Heart University School of Public Health
 - Had 61 students attend and they want us to come back in November
 - 3 professors from those presentations are now attending the RESULTS Conference (1 as a REAL Changer)
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- Asked one professor model a call, even though they had never done it before
 - Also tabled at local Indivisible event
 - Had Laser Talks both domestic and global issues
 - Generated 36 letters in an hour, which we will deliver in our next meeting with Rep. Jim Himes
 - At all 3 events, we collected names and contact info for our local Action Network
 - Content of presentations
 - We're excited about the presentation format we've developed
 - We have 45 min and 90 min versions
 - Each person in our group takes a different part
 - Open with an Intro of RESULTS (short or long (long includes info about a successful campaign and how to get a member of Congress on board)
 - Train people on the EPIC Laser Talk using the "fill-in-the-blank" format and then they practice
 - Do a PPT on the issue – 12 slides are plenty of info for 5 minutes
 - Ask them to take action on the spot – have someone role model a call and then encourage everyone to make calls themselves
 - Q&A
 - End with ways to get involved – sign up for e-mails, come to a RESULTS meeting, attend a lobby meeting, and give info about REAL Change and the Conference
 - We can't wait to try again – has created a lot of energy in our area
- **Judy Zobel of RESULTS Des Moines**
 - I call this "stalking your senator"
 - My motivation came from a call I made to the Ag aide for my senator Joni Ernst (R-IA) and had a great talk with him and he encouraged me to call back any time. So, I did (via calls and e-mail) but was not hearing back
 - We set up meeting with Sen. Ernst's regional director and had a great meeting again but told them about the lack of response from my recent attempts to contact them. It really irked me. I am beginning to understand that they are working for me and that made me angry.
 - They immediately called the DC office and I got a message back quickly. I set up a phone call with the Ag aide again

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- In the meantime, Sen. Ernst was having a town hall 45 minutes away so I drove through wet and muddle Iowa to get there
- I was completely surprised when Sen. Ernst introduced me, before I could speak. She said I was from RESULTS and pays attention to people who are struggling in our state
- I spoke with the Senator and got a different take on the issue from her than from her aides
- Then I went home and spoke to the Ag aide in DC
- I also wrote a letter to the editor a few days ago but there was another beautiful LTE about SNAP today so they might not print mine
- I also did some research on SNAP and military families b/c Sen. Ernst cares about issues affecting the military, which I sent to her aides and got a thank you back
- Sen. Ernst's take on SNAP: She has doesn't mind the work requirements. However, she would ditch them for the sake of bipartisanship. Bipartisanship is really important to her and I wonder if there are others who think the same way.
 - Meredith: the good news is that there are definitely members of both political parties that don't want to see cuts to SNAP and a whole bunch that want a strong bipartisan bill more than they want cuts to food assistance
- That's my stalking story – thank you
- **Stella Linn of RESULTS Kansas City**
 - I am some of my 7th grade classmates are in an after school Social Justice Club, where we talk about social justice issues in our community
 - Last year, my dad (Jos) came and talked to us about poverty and advocacy
 - We thought it was interesting and decided we wanted to do advocacy this year by talking to our member of Congress
 - We chose federally-funded after school programs because it was something that affected youth
 - Leading up to the meeting with our member of Congress (Rep. Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO-5), we used organizing strategies, the Laser Talk, and advocacy skills I learned at RESULTS to prepare
 - In the meeting, he came in and first talked about guns in schools and then we talked about our issue
 - People in our group shared their stories about how after school programs helped them

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- I thought the meeting went well; he talked about how Congress doesn't work the way we are taught how it's supposed to work
- Compared to other meetings I've been in with RESULTS, I thought this one went really well
- Jos: Rep. Cleaver explained that kids have much more of a voice than they think – members of Congress are scared of kids because they can influence what their parents do

May Friends and Family Fundraising Campaign

Mea Geizhals, Grassroots Fundraising Manager

Support Moms, Champion Kids **Spring 2018 Friends and Family Fundraising Campaign**

- Peer-to-peer, online fundraising campaign
- May 1 – May 31, 2018
- Resources for you:
 - Campaign guide with email templates
 - Personal fundraising website on Salsa Labs
 - One-on-one support from Mea
 - Extra resources for first time fundraisers
- Check it out: <https://results.salsalabs.org/momsandkids>
- **Why Join?**
 - Raise needed funds for our work
 - Grow your network of advocates and supporters by spreading the word about your great work to end poverty
 - Have fun with your group
- **Big Goals!**
 - \$40,000 fundraising goal
 - *Joanne's Challenge*: 100% Group participation in grassroots fundraising in 2018
 - *Tip: Don't wait to fundraise!* Fundraise this spring to avoid competing with mid-term elections fundraising in the fall.
- **Next Steps**
 - Save the Date: Campaign Kick Off Training THURSDAY May 3rd at 8:30 PM Eastern
 - Get started at <https://results.salsalabs.org/momsandkids>

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- Questions? Plan to join? Be in touch! Contact Mea Geizhals, mgeizhals@results.org, (202) 783-4800, x.131.

Board Election Announcement

Maxine Thomas, RESULTS Grassroots Board Member and Expert on Poverty

- Thank you for positive support and feedback on your work on the anti-oppression council and anti-oppression work going on in the organization
- Grassroots Board seat will open up this summer when Beth Wilson leaves because of term limits
 - Beth has done a magnificent job, representing the grassroots and ensuring that our voice (the grassroots) is being heard on the Board
- You can nominate yourself or someone you know who will be a strong voice to represent the grassroots on the Board
- Nominations are due by Monday, May 14
- Thank you to Kristy Martino for her time and work with RESULTS when she leaves staff later this month
- She's been a strong voice for the organization but also the Experts on Poverty
- We love you and we look forward to seeing you again

Announcements and Final Action

Kristy Martino, Senior Organizer for U.S. Poverty Campaigns

- **International Conference**
 - Early Bird Registration deadline is May 15 – only 2 weeks away! Save \$50 off registration by signing up now.
 - Goal: Every group sends at least one person to the Conference. We want your voice represented on Lobby Day!
 - Register at www.resultsconference.org
- **RESULTS Anti-Oppression Training Webinar, Tuesday, May 15 at 9:00p m ET.** We will do "cultural sketches" understand how our identities influence our values, decisions, behaviors, and opportunities.
- Next webinar is **Tuesday, June 5 at 8:00pm ET**
- This will be Kristy's last webinar as a staff member but I will be back as a volunteer (leaving
 - My experience working with my colleagues, my friends in the Experts on Poverty cohort, and all of you has been the most transformative experience of my life

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- My friends say that I have lost my cynicism and it's true and it's because of you
- You taught me how to be hopeful and how to keep going and I cannot thank you enough for that

Final Action – Protect SNAP!

Use the media to tell Congress to protect SNAP from harmful cuts and changes

Before you go to bed tonight, submit a letter to the editor to your local paper calling on your members of Congress to reject the SNAP cuts proposed in the House Farm Bill.

Use our online template to get started: <http://www.results.org/take-action/action-center?vsrc=%2fcampaigns%2f54070%2frespond>