

House Committee on Agriculture
The Power of Work: Expanding Opportunity through SNAP
April 8, 2025

Witnesses:

- [Dr. Angela Rachidi](#), Senior Fellow and Rowe Scholar, American Enterprise Institute, Washington, DC.
- [Sam Schaeffer](#), Chief Executive Officer, Center for Employment Opportunities, New York, NY. Accompanied by Mr. William Lewis, Site Supervisor, Center for Employment Opportunities
- William Lewis:
- [Dr. Diane Schanzenbach](#), Margaret Walker Alexander Professor of Human Development and Social Policy, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.
- [David Tidwell](#), President and Chief Executive Officer, Hope Ministries/The Way to Work, Baton Rouge, LA.

Highlights:

- This hearing examined the effectiveness of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in improving employment opportunities, addressing food insecurity issues, and helping to lift people out of poverty. The arguments were made along partisan lines. One side of the aisle shed doubt on the effectiveness of SNAP in achieving its intended goals and therefore supporting a Reconciliation bill that would cut SNAP funding by about \$230 billion. The otherside argued that cutting SNAP would be detrimental to millions of children, elderly, and people with disabilities that are SNAP participants. Republicans claim there is rampant fraud and that statewide waivers harm the program.
- There were no specific mentions of SNAP in relation to Tribal nations.

Opening Statements:

[Rep. Glenn "GT" Thompson](#) (Chair; R-PA) spoke on the importance of strengthening connection between SNAP and employment.

- He stated that there are 7.6 million open jobs in the country; ¾ of non-disabled adults without dependents who are receiving SNAP are not working; capable and not taking care of relatives.
- Work Requirement and SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) Programs are two key components in SNAP.
- In some States, broad waivers enable some individuals to “stay in the sidelines”.
- Congress must ensure waivers are for those that need it.

[Opening Statement: Thompson](#)

[Rep. Angie Craig](#) (Ranking Member; D-MN) raised concerns about tariffs and trade war, funding cuts from nutrition and other programs that Congress put in place, ignoring contracts with USDA.

- She stated that cutting SNAP would also cut farmer revenue about \$230 million.
- Millions of hardworking Americans that depend on SNAP; cutting SNAP also cuts jobs across the board.

Witnesses:

- [Dr. Angela Rachidi](#) studies SNAP effectiveness in reducing poverty and increasing food security.
 - Stated that SNAP discourages work; SNAP participation rates have grown despite low unemployment rates.
 - 15 million that receive snaps (58%) are non-disabled working age adults.
- Rachidi asserted that SNAP is supposed to be counter cyclical; increasing when the economy struggles, decreasing when the economy recovers. But her research shows that it is only partly counter cyclical.
- Dr. Rachidi also discussed how research on work requirements has not been clear, noting that data and methodological limitations contribute to research inconsistencies.

[Sam Schaeffer](#) spoke about his organization, Center for Employment Opportunities, and the has trained 97 organizations on employment and training (E&T).

- Spoke on the Bipartisan RESTORE Act, saying that it would help break cycles of incarceration.

William Lewis:

- Previously incarcerated but used SNAP and E&T Training at the Center for Employment Opportunities to turn life around.

[Dr. Diane Schanzenbach](#) raised concerns about long-term decline in US's employment rate.

- Stated that increasing SNAP mandatory requirements will not improve employment outcome.
 - General SNAP work requirement (e.g. accepting suitable job offer and not quitting)
 - States created SNAP E&T; most states don't have enough E&T slots and therefore target programming on individuals and services high priority to states.
 - Those able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDS) lose benefits if not working at least 20 hours per week

- Research says work requirements for ABAWDS are not effective to increase employment.
- Current SNAP work requirement policies aren't effective.
- SNAP is a stabilizer in downturned economies.

[David Tidwell](#) pushed for the need for robust employment and training programs.

- He explained that without access to SNAP E&T, they remain trapped in the cycle of poverty, but the return of investments from SNAP E&T is strong.