

Introduced by Senators Arreguín and Weber Pierson

March 27, 2025

Senate Joint Resolution No. 3—Relative to food assistance.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 3, as introduced, Arreguín. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

This measure would urge the United States Congress to avoid any cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which could harm the state's children, older adults, and families, and impact the state's economic well-being.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, California produces nearly one-half of the nation's
2 fruits and vegetables, yet more than one in five Californians, which
3 is about 8,800,000 individuals, currently struggle with food
4 insecurity. One in six families with children experience food
5 insecurity according to the Public Policy Institute of California.
6 Two-thirds of California's 24,000 college students are experiencing
7 food insecurity, according to the California Student Aid
8 Commission, which sounded an alarm after its 2023 survey of
9 students; and

10 WHEREAS, CalFresh is the largest antihunger program in
11 California, alleviating hunger for 5,400,000 people, including
12 nearly 2,000,000 older adults, in this state. Hunger is on the rise,
13 as evidenced both by increased applications for CalFresh and
14 increasing demand on the state's food banks; and

15 WHEREAS, The CalFresh benefit is fully funded by the federal
16 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the federal

1 government's antihunger program run by the United States
2 Department of Agriculture, while the federal government shares
3 with the state and counties the cost to administer the program and
4 support outreach efforts; and

5 WHEREAS, The federal government provides more than
6 \$1,000,000,000 per month in food benefits to needy Californians,
7 or nearly \$12,500,000,000 in 2024; and

8 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Agriculture
9 estimates that every \$1 of SNAP funding generates \$1.54 to \$1.80
10 in local economic activity, so the actual benefit of SNAP to
11 California is as much as \$22,500,000,000 annually. Furthermore,
12 SNAP funding sustains 173,000 jobs across California's food and
13 farming economy; and

14 WHEREAS, CalFresh benefits additionally supplement bottled
15 drinking water for families in the County of Kern, whose water
16 systems do not provide drinkable water, and provide nutritional
17 food to 200,000 college students in California, allowing those
18 students to remain in school; and

19 WHEREAS, Researchers have improved documented health
20 and economic well-being outcomes for SNAP beneficiaries,
21 including improved birth weight, decreased rates of diabetes,
22 obesity, hypertension, children's developmental disabilities and
23 depression, and, for children who receive CalFresh, a decreased
24 reliance on public benefits as adults; and

25 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Agriculture has
26 cancelled up to \$500,000,000 worth of produce, poultry and other
27 items bound for the nation's food banks, including more than 300
28 truckloads destined for California; and

29 WHEREAS, The United States Congress is debating deep cuts
30 to the SNAP program that could have profound impacts on
31 California's neediest families and the state's farmers and grocers.
32 At the same time, the federal government is proposing deep,
33 ongoing cuts to the nation's food bank network, which serves many
34 of the same hungry families. One in three families receiving the
35 CalFresh benefit also relies on food banks to supplement their
36 dietary needs; now, therefore, be it

37 *Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of*
38 *California, jointly,* That the Legislature of the State of California
39 urges the United States Congress to avoid any cuts to the SNAP
40 program, which could harm the state's children, older adults, and

1 families, and impact the state's economic well-being; and be it
2 further

3 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
4 this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United
5 States, to the Speaker of the United States House of
6 Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the United States Senate,
7 to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress
8 of the United States, to the Governor, to the Attorney General, and
9 to the author for appropriate distribution.

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