

July 1, 2025

The Honorable Chuck Edwards
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Edwards:

As a statewide organization supporting individuals returning to their communities after incarceration, we are writing to urge you to take action to support positive reentry outcomes and the health of your constituents. **Please vote NO on a federal budget that includes cuts to vital SNAP and Medicaid programs.**

that you act protect access to food benefits for 1.4 million North Carolinians and prevent our state from losing \$420 million in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) funds. North Carolina also risks losing \$39.9 billion in Medicaid funding over the next decade

Proposed SNAP cuts in the Senate budget would rip away food assistance from millions of people, including people returning home from incarceration, families with children, workers, veterans, seniors, people with disabilities and chronic health conditions, and many others. A staggering 91 percent of people recently released from prison report experiencing food insecurity, with 37 percent going entire days without eating because they did not have enough money.

SNAP and Medicaid are essential lifelines that ensure many reentering individuals and their households have access to essential nutrition, stability, and better health outcomes - all key factors in reducing recidivism.

The North Carolina Justice Center is deeply concerned with the Senate's cuts to SNAP, which includes particularly harsh impacts on people with prior convictions and families, such as implementing work requirements for older adults and parents with school-age children. These added work requirements impose additional restrictions on households already struggling to meet basic needs and present the most harm to families that include children, disabled people, and older adults, who make up [86 percent of SNAP recipients](#).

For people with prior convictions, work reporting requirements cause even more severe hurdles for food access and Medicaid. Stigma, discrimination, and a host of other collateral consequences make it difficult for reentry individuals to find and keep employment. Not having access to food through SNAP or other types of social services such as Medicaid can create or exacerbate health problems. It creates barriers for someone with a prior conviction trying to make meaningful contributions to their household and community.

Formerly incarcerated people experience disproportionately higher rates of chronic conditions, substance use disorders, and mental health disorders. Medicaid is an essential form of coverage for accessing treatment to care for these underlying health conditions, and proposed work reporting requirements will create unnecessary barriers for a vulnerable population that needs to access healthcare.

The proposals to cut the thrifty food plan and shift the costs of food benefits to the state come during a time when we must focus on Hurricane Helene recovery. These proposals will further strain North Carolina's economy and will lead to many North Carolinians, including those reentering after a period of incarceration, having less access to healthy, nutritious food, and lifesaving health insurance coverage to care for themselves and their families.

Protecting SNAP and Medicaid is a common-sense effort that is good for reentry, good for the state, and good for the economy. Every dollar spent on SNAP benefits generates an estimated \$1.50 in economic benefits. According to the USDA's Economic Research Service, each \$1 billion of retail generated by SNAP creates \$340 million in farm production, \$110 million in farm value-added, and 3,300 farm jobs nationally.

Protecting Medicaid and SNAP for North Carolinians with prior convictions supports successful reentry, overall health, reduces recidivism, and helps the economy. **We urge you to take action to support positive reentry outcomes and the health of your constituents by voting NO on a federal budget that includes cuts vital SNAP and Medicaid programs.** The health and safety of our communities depends on you.

Signed,

North Carolina Justice Center

