

June 10, 2025

Dear Senators,

We, the undersigned national organizations who support and advocate for military service members, veterans, and their families, urge you to reject any budget reconciliation proposal that would result in harmful changes or benefit reductions to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). In addition, we ask you to ensure that low and moderate-income working veteran and active-military families' children benefit from any expansion of the Child Tax Credit.

SNAP helps over 42 million food insecure Americans put meals on the table every day, including over a million currently serving military personnel, veterans, and their families. SNAP is our nation's most efficient and effective anti-poverty tool, and the program must be available, accessible, and substantial for anyone who needs it.

Although our active-duty military and veteran families experience food insecurity at higher rates than their civilian counterparts, policy hurdles, misinformation, bureaucracy, stigma, and shame keep many of them from accessing federal nutrition assistance like SNAP.¹ We need to be investing more, not less, in reaching these populations that face unique barriers to assistance.

While military and veteran hunger present an urgent threat to our national defense, Congress has opted to worsen the situation significantly. The budget reconciliation bill adopted by the House of Representatives on May 22, 2025, includes roughly \$300 billion (over ten years) of cuts that the Congressional Budget Office estimates will strip food assistance from millions of households and reduce it for many others. As a result, millions of Americans will be at risk of going hungry — including a significant number of military and veteran families.

The House changes to SNAP, including freezing future updates to the Thrifty Food Plan (the basis of SNAP benefits), expanding SNAP's current "work requirements," and shifting benefit costs to states, will only decrease enrollment and increase hunger. This will lead to longer lines at food pantries and charitable services — including those operating on or near military bases and veteran support centers — across the country who cannot meet growing needs.

We are also deeply troubled by the way the House expansion of the Child Tax Credit would leave out many working families in the military and veteran community. The House-passed bill would leave roughly 680,000 children of working veterans as well as some children of active duty members out of the full proposed \$2,500 Child Tax Credit (an increase of \$500), simply

¹ Rabbitt, M.P., & Beymer, M.R. (2024). *Comparing food insecurity among the U.S. military and civilian adult populations* (Report No. ERR-331). U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. <https://doi.org/10.32747/2024.8374828.ers>.

because their families' incomes are too low.² These children are among the roughly 20 million children in low- and moderate-income working families who would be denied the full \$2,500 credit that children in higher-income families would get. Any expansion of the Child Tax Credit should prioritize helping children in lower-income working families and should not leave behind the children of many working veterans who work hard for low pay.

The federal budget reflects our nation's highest priorities, and making sure our military and veteran families have enough to eat should not be a question. Particularly at a time when food prices and economic uncertainty are rising, our men and women who have or are currently serving in uniform should be able to count on the federal government to be there for them in times of need. And these families struggling to make ends meet must not be left out of any expansion of the Child Tax Credit.

These individuals and their families have already sacrificed so much for our country. We urge you not to advance budget proposals that risk their ability to make ends meet.

Sincerely,

Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service

Easterseals, Inc.

Exceptional Families of the Military

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America

Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A.

MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger

Military Child Education Coalition

Military Spouse Chamber of Commerce

National Coalition for Homeless Veterans

National Military Family Association

Operation Child Care Project

Partners in PROMISE

Soldiers' Angels

Tricare for Kids Coalition

VoteVets

Women Veterans and Families Network (WVFN)

² Marr, C., Horton, E., & Huang, C. (2024, April 18). House Republican tax bill is skewed to wealthy, costs more than extending 2017 law. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/federal-tax/house-republican-tax-bill-is-skewed-to-wealthy-costs-more-than-extending-2017#roughly-680000-children-of-working-cbpp-anchor>.