

House Ag Committee Members' Day Hearing

- Thank you, Chairman Thompson and Ranking Member Craig, for hosting this hearing.
- I'm here today because my residents are reaching out in distress, and as co-founder of the Congressional Mamas' Caucus, I'm here for the mothers and families across the country.
- After seeing their lifeline to food get treated as a political pawn by the Trump Administration during the shutdown, they are scared it will happen again.
- And they're not alone: 42 million Americans will see their SNAP benefits cut as a result of Republicans' Big Ugly Bill. This is the largest cut to SNAP in our history.
- You cannot cut SNAP this deeply without taking food off the plates of children, seniors, and working families.
- According to USDA, nearly 40% of SNAP recipients are children, so children will bear the brunt of these cuts.
- One study estimates that every SNAP dollar invested in children returns \$62 in value over their lifetime. Investments like SNAP in childhood help in development, allowing kids to learn without having to think about where their next meal is coming from.
- And it's not just children, in Michigan, 36% of SNAP households also include older adults.
- Hear it from a resident in our district, who wrote to us during the hostage taking of SNAP during the government shutdown.
- She said: I'm a 74-year-old single female senior citizen with social security as my only income. I get \$24 on an EBT card. This helps me to purchase fresh fruits and veggies. I can also get ½gallon of milk, margarine, and loaf of bread.

- Are we really saying we don't have money to make sure our seniors can afford milk and bread?
- Almost 300,000 households in Michigan's 12th Congressional District receive SNAP benefits, and the average benefit is less than \$6 per person, per day. Some are even less, like the senior I just mentioned.
- So let me get this straight, according to Republicans, \$6 a day is too expensive to help feed the hungry, but nearly \$1 trillion in tax cuts to corporations and the wealthy is okay. \$40 billion to Argentina is okay. The gold-plated ballroom is okay.
- There always seems to be enough money for war, just this week we're voting on an \$890 billion dollar bill for the pentagon. Yet, somehow, there's not enough money so we can feed our most vulnerable community members.
- I call BS.
- Stories like those I'm hearing from our residents are not isolated; they reflect reality in too many communities across this country. When SNAP is cut or disrupted, our families are forced into crisis mode.
- Cutting SNAP doesn't make our families stronger, it makes them hungrier, sicker, and less economically stable.
- The Agriculture Committee should be strengthening and protecting SNAP, so it is there when people need it, not gutting it at the very moment working families are getting crushed by the high cost of food.

- I call on Congress to reject these cuts and make children and families, like those you represent, a national budget priority, not corporations, not billionaires, not special interests.
- Thank you and I yield back.