



NEWS RELEASE

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For more information, contact:

Chris Sanders at (334) 832-9060

Food Assistance Cuts Coming for 900K+ Alabamians This Fall

ACPP's Forrister: Reductions Will Hurt Families Already Hammered by Economic Woes, State Grocery Tax

Nearly one in five Alabamians – 910,000 people – will face cuts to food assistance this fall when a temporary boost to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) expires, according to [a new report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities \(CBPP\)](#), a nonprofit research organization in Washington, D.C.

Overall, more than 47 million Americans, including 22 million children, will see reductions beginning Nov. 1, according to the study based on data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The cuts will result from the expiration of a modest benefit boost included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to strengthen the economy and ease hardship for low-income families. The across-the-board cuts to SNAP, formerly known as food stamps, will slash \$5 billion from the program in fiscal year (FY) 2014 alone. Cuts that deep will deal a major blow to low-income Alabamians still trying to overcome the lingering effects of the Great Recession, ACPP executive director Kimble Forrister said.

“Food stamps are a vital lifeline for hundreds of thousands of Alabamians who are struggling to find work or working at jobs that don’t pay enough to feed their families,” Forrister said. “These cuts will be painful and counterproductive for so many of our friends and neighbors who are still fighting to get back on their feet.”

All SNAP recipients will be subject to the cuts, which will drain \$98 million from Alabama’s economy next year. A family of three stands to lose \$29 a month starting in November, or \$319 for the rest of FY 2014. The upcoming cut will drive average SNAP benefits below \$1.40 per person per meal next year.

The cuts may hit Alabama’s low-income families even harder than those in most other states, Forrister said, because Alabama is one of only four states with no tax break on groceries. Food bought with SNAP benefits is not subject to sales tax, but those benefits cover only a portion of eligible households’ food bills. Recipients pay the full grocery tax on any food they purchase after their benefits run out.

“SNAP benefits are a powerful tool to ease poverty,” Forrister said. “In tough times, we ought to look for more ways to help low-income families, instead of putting their food assistance on the chopping block.”

The full CBPP report, “SNAP Benefits Will Be Cut for All Participants in November 2013,” is [available here](#).

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Arise Citizens’ Policy Project is a nonprofit statewide citizens’ organization comprising 145 congregations and community groups that promote public policies to improve the lives of low-income Alabamians.