



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McCarthy:

The undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) write to urge Congress to include improvements to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for people with disabilities in the next COVID-19 response legislation. CCD is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

The growing outbreak of COVID-19 across the United States creates specific issues for people with disabilities. The disability community includes millions of individuals with underlying or pre-existing conditions who are, and will be, particularly at risk as COVID-19 continues to spread across the country. These individuals will face high risk of complications and death if exposed to the outbreak and they need to isolate themselves for protection. This makes access to online ordering of needed supplies and groceries absolutely critical and, for many, a matter of life and death. We believe expanding the SNAP Online Purchasing Pilot program will greatly alleviate the issue of food insecurity among SNAP beneficiaries with disabilities during the pandemic. We are attaching a letter we have sent to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) detailing how we believe USDA should be expanding the program as Congress intended, but we also believe that more must be done to fully address this issue.

Alongside efforts to further expand delivery options for SNAP participants to ensure that people with disabilities can remain safe, higher benefit levels are needed. Congress should boost SNAP maximum benefits by 15 percent, increase the minimum SNAP benefit to \$30, and suspend all SNAP administrative rules that would terminate or reduce benefits.

In addition to encouraging USDA to take the necessary steps to expand the pilot, Congress should direct USDA to notify retailers of the existing opportunities through which they can deliver groceries and permit SNAP participants to have their EBT card swiped at either the point of home delivery or when the order is picked up at the store. Congress should also authorize public-private partnerships between USDA and authorized SNAP retailers to support food delivery during the emergency by providing funding through state agencies to reimburse retailers or community-based organizations for delivery fees for SNAP participants.

This unprecedented time calls for bold measures in order to ensure all people remain safe and healthy during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Food security must be accessible and safe for people with disabilities. We look forward to working with Congress on this important issue. Please do not hesitate to contact Cyrus Huncharek (cyrus.huncharek@ndrn.org) or Bethany Lilly (lilly@thearc.org) with any questions.

Sincerely,

American Diabetes Association
American Network of Community Options & Resources (ANCOR)
Autism Society of America
Center for Public Representation
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund (DREDF)
Epilepsy Foundation
The Jewish Federations of North America
Justice in Aging
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Health Law Program
RespectAbility
Special Needs Alliance
The Arc of the United States

CC: Senator Pat Roberts, Senator Debbie Stabenow, Representative Collin Peterson,
Representative Michael Conaway