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Latino Leaders Condemn U.S. House Vote to Gut SNAP Funding
Bill Attacks Families in Need, Millions Would Lose Food Aid From Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Washington, D.C. -- The National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), a coalition of 36 of the nation’s preeminent Latino organizations, issued the following statements condemning members of the U.S. House of Representatives who today voted 217- to 210 to pass the draconian Nutrition Reform and Work Opportunity Act (H.R. 3102). The measure would deny food assistance to 3.8 million people, including children.

"Today’s deplorable vote in the House takes aim at our most vulnerable fellow citizens. As American families struggle to get back on their feet after the recession, this bill pulls the rug out from under them. The bill would slash $40 billion from SNAP and create inhumane new restrictions," said Hector Sanchez, Chair of NHLA and Executive Director of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA). "One in six Americans relies on this program for basic nutrition needs. Scoring political points by allowing millions of families to go hungry is a new low for House Republicans."

“This bill takes an axe to one of the most important lifelines that families, and particularly Latino families, rely on to provide basic nutrition for their children. One out of every six Americans currently uses SNAP, with Latinos accounting for about 17 percent of participants. The program is a critical buffer from hunger for children, especially Latino children, who are less likely to have access to food—than their non-Hispanic White counterparts,” said Janet Murguía, President and CEO, NCLR.

“The extreme cuts to nutrition assistance approved by the House of Representatives will take a devastating toll on the health, well-being, and economic security of women, children, and people of color. H.R. 3102 would literally take food away from millions of hungry children and hardworking families who pay into safety net programs with their tax dollars. Nutrition assistance enables children and families to succeed in school and at work, and fully contribute to their families and communities. Today’s vote in the House of Representatives defies our nation’s shared values of fairness and equality of opportunity,” said Jessica González-Rojas, Executive Director of the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health.

"The House has demonstrated a lack of respect for the farmworkers -- the people who produce our grow and harvest our crops -- who are often paid such poor wages that they cannot afford to purchase for their families the nutritious food they produce,” said Bruce Goldstein, President of Farmworker Justice.
“The call from Congress for cuts to SNAP is deplorable. It is just despicable that Congress would treat poor people this way, who depend on SNAP for basic nutrition to be able to work for our society and for feeding children to grow to be healthy and able to study in school,” said Dr. Elena V. Rios, President & CEO of the National Hispanic Medical Association.

"One of America’s most cherished values is compassion, especially for the most vulnerable in our communities. The House of Representatives’ vote to deny food assistance to millions of poor Americans, including children, undermines such values and threatens the health of the neediest in our midst. The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) urges the House to rescind this ill-advised vote," said Dr. Antonio Flores, President & CEO of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities.

“The failure of this Congress to address the economic challenges facing this country have resulted in increasing poverty, a continued high unemployment rate and a sequester that has significantly undercut an already strained safety net. These are all developments that affect the Latino community disproportionately, a community experiencing an unacceptably high 25 percent poverty rate, yet only 21 percent of Latinos participate in SNAP. This program not only lifts many Latinos and others out of poverty, but also serves as an economic stimulus to inner city businesses. Already scheduled for a significant cut, the current proposal to cut food stamps further is economically shortsighted and needlessly harms the most vulnerable among us,” said Angelo Falcón, President, National Institute for Latino Policy (NiLP).

Established in 1991, the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA) brings together Hispanic leaders to establish policy priorities that address, and raise public awareness of, the major issues affecting the Latino community and the nation as a whole. For more information, please visit www.nationalhispanicleadership.org and follow @NHLAgenda.

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