

October 30, 2025

## **Governor Hochul Commits \$106 Million to Fighting Hunger During Federal Shutdown**

With the federal shutdown entering its thirtieth day, it is now expected that federal funding for SNAP benefits (food stamps) will run out at the end of October. This morning, Governor Hochul announced an additional \$65 million in funding for charitable food assistance, bringing overall state funding for emergency food assistance to \$106 million. We commend the governor for her efforts to keep New Yorkers fed while the federal government gambles with human lives.

The best way to ensure that the forty-two million Americans—including three million New Yorkers—relying on SNAP receive their benefits would be for Republicans in Washington to end the shutdown by agreeing to extend the enhanced Affordable Care Act subsidies that help millions of Americans pay for their health insurance. Second best would be for Republican leadership to authorize the use of emergency contingency funds and other federal resources that would keep SNAP funded through November, as has been done during every other government shutdown. In the absence of such leadership, state governments are forced to find ways to keep food on the tables of their most vulnerable residents.

This crisis brings to the fore the weakness of the American welfare state. SNAP is one of the only remaining broad-based programs to ensure that low-income families can pay for their basic needs. While it is often understood as an “entitlement” program—i.e. one that all low-income Americans are entitled to receive no matter the overall cost—we are seeing the weakness of our federal funding mechanisms emerge in real time. The Trump administration has prioritized the erosion of the social safety net since before the president reassumed office. We can now see how fragile the existing system is.

This coming weekend, three million New Yorkers—including one million children—who rely on SNAP for food security will collectively lose the \$640 million per month that they receive in benefits, triggering an immediate hunger crisis throughout the state. What’s more, sixteen thousand retailers that serve SNAP recipients will also lose out on \$640 million in aggregate monthly revenue—a huge loss that could put strain on these businesses.

Governor Hochul’s \$106 million in emergency food funds will be significantly more consequential than the meager \$11 million announced on October 24. However, channeling these funds through food banks and emergency resource organizations, as the Governor intends, is far less efficient than loading food benefits onto the SNAP Electronic Benefit Transfer cards that families are accustomed to using. Further, failure to channel funds onto these cards leaves the state’s sixteen thousand local grocers and SNAP retailers at risk of vast revenue losses that could have a large ripple effect in the economy. Even if the \$106 million were to be efficiently allocated to households in need, it would cover merely six days’ worth of food. If the shutdown persists, we encourage the governor to consider extending funds beyond one week of assistance and to continue to investigate ways to load SNAP EBT cards with the funds upon which families rely.