

March 20, 2018



Kentucky Congressional Delegation
Washington D.C.

Dear Congressman,

The Trump Administration's 2019 budget proposes to restructure the SNAP program and provide a "Harvest Box" to eligible households filled with shelf-stable items picked by the government. This proposal to start this new government-run program has caused much concern from Kentucky food retailers, many who have been indispensable private sector partners with SNAP for many years.

The administration estimates that substituting food deliveries for food assistance payments would save \$129 billion over a decade. But it is hard to fathom how moving the distribution of food from the private sector (the most efficient in the world) to a government sector layered with bureaucracy will save any money at all. Every day food is shipped across this commonwealth from Kentucky-based warehouses and distribution centers for just pennies over cost to local grocery and convenience stores in every county in the state, including some in remote, rural locations.

Another concern with this proposal is that it will severely limit choice of foods recipients will receive. When government chooses the foods its citizens must eat, there are a whole host of issues that arise. As it relates to a "Harvest Box" approach, the government will be forced to choose food items designed for shelf-stability rather than nutritional value. Additionally, limits on food choice present problems with those Kentuckians who have dietary health restrictions such as low-sugar or gluten-free while further exacerbating nutritional shortcomings we see in diets today. Whether it's ethnic traditions, dietary needs, or simply the ability to eat fresh fruits and vegetables, Kentuckians need food choice.

Lastly, this proposal will undoubtedly cut local retailers from the SNAP program, diminishing the free-market principles that create competition. You can imagine the impact of these lost sales to local businesses, the loss of thousands of jobs Kentuckians depend on to support their families and the negative impact on communities across the commonwealth.

I urge you to oppose the "Harvest Box" proposal and instead continue to look for ways that public-private partnerships can continue to serve the needs of the economically challenged in the commonwealth.

Sincerely,

G. Lynn Rice
Chairman of the Board

340 Democrat Drive – Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
www.kgcsa.com – info@kgcsa.com
(502) 696-9153 phone – (502) 875-1595 fax