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The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

I write to express my strongest opposition to the proposed cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). As you are aware, the \$40 billion in cuts over the next decade will not only reduce assistance to needy families and those with disabilities in our respective districts, but will also result in a loss of food assistance to many children and families. Additionally, these cuts are being pushed while profligate subsidies to the tune of billions of are provided annually to oil, gas, and Wall Street firms. The social safety net of America should not be undermined, and our great national promise to use America's farms to feed the hungry should not be abandoned, especially as main street seeks to recover from the greatest economic downturn since the Great Depression.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), between four and six million people would lose their food assistance benefits should the proposal before the House become law. These struggling families would be forced to rely on already overburdened soup kitchens and food pantries – nonprofit organizations whose federal funding has been cut during the sequester. Moreover, the cuts you seek will also harm our most vulnerable populations, millions of children, seniors, and the disabled. Nearly 17 million children and 5 million seniors in America live with food insecurity. Child hunger is so prevalent, that three in four teachers report students come to school hungry on a regular basis. This is unacceptable for a nation as bountiful as ours, and it undermines our future, since hungry children do not learn as well as those whose basic human needs are met.

In the heart of your district, in Butler county, the average cost for a meal is \$2.59 per person. The average cost in Ohio is \$2.44 per meal. Yet the current allocation under SNAP is about \$1.50 per meal. Your cuts would further reduce an already woefully inadequate allocation; an allocation that would not even pay for an average meal in many areas of the country.

Meanwhile, tax cuts are sought for the top one percent of income earners, who according to recent figures control 20% of the wealth in our nation. This concentration of wealth has not been seen in eighty years and has not had the trickle-down effect we have been told. Middle class families continue to struggle, and the ladder to success is missing vital rungs.

Budget deficit reduction should not be done on the backs of the most vulnerable in our society. If reducing the budget deficit is your goal, I urge you to cut the billions in corporate welfare provided to corporations such as Exxon Mobil, Monsanto, or Citibank.

Thank you for your attention to this critical request on behalf of my constituents and the millions of Americans who have historically benefitted from a properly funded SNAP program.

Yours in Partnership,


KEVIN PARKER