

SNAP Program Development Division

ID: LFG-2018-0014

Food and Nutrition, Services

United States Department of Agriculture

3101 Park Center Drive, Room 812

Alexandria, Virginia, 22302

Sent via: Mail

April 9th, 2018

Re: 0584-AE57, Docket Number

Dear United States Department of Agriculture,

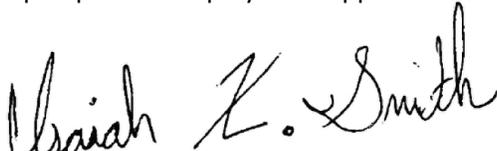
I am sending you this comment in which is in regard and pertaining to Docket Number: 0584-AE57. The subject of this docket number is about requirements and services for able-bodied adults without dependents who are participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. It should be known that the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, limits the amount of time an able-bodied adult without dependents can receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits of up to three (3) months in a thirty-six (36) month period, unless the individual is working and or is participating in workfare. The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 exempts individuals from the time limit for several reasons, including age, unfitness for work, or having a dependent child. The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 also provides state governmental bodies of the United States with flexibility to request a waiver of this time limit if unemployment is high or the area does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment. The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 gives the states of the United States discretion to exempt fifteen (15) percent of the individuals who would otherwise be subject to the limit.

The United States Department of Agriculture's policy goal objective is to address food insecurity by providing supplemental food assistance and helping able-body participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, to be able to move out of poverty and into work in a manner that is consistent with the structure and the intent of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008. As described in Sections 2 and 6(d) of the Food and Nutrition Act, the goals of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program are to promote food security, self-sufficiency, well-being, and economic mobility. As far as this agenda item is concerned, the United States Department of Agriculture is seeking public input to inform potential policy, program, and regulatory changes to more consistently advance its policy goal objective.

While I am grateful that the United States Department of Agriculture has a Supplemental Assistance Nutrition Program in which does have the intent to help those that are in need, I am not so sure that the United States having this domestic policy as to turning its back on individuals that do not have dependents is a good policy goal objective. While it may be true that individuals that do not have dependents may not have to worry about feeding dependents, I do hope that you understand that the circumstances of individuals that do not have dependents but that need assistance is different across the country. In the United States, there are a lot of homeless individuals in which do include young

adults, and those homeless individuals also include veterans of the armed forces of the United States.¹ With regard and pertaining to homeless individuals, some individuals that never experienced being in that type of climate, believe that all homeless individuals are homeless for their own choices. While that may be true for some individuals, there are a lot of individuals that do not have dependents that do need help. Some young adults that are homeless individuals are trying to attend college at public and at private educational institutions. Those individuals need to be assisted by the United States Department of Agriculture, especially when those individuals are trying to improve the quality of their lives.

In conclusion, I understand President Donald J. Trump's ideology² on getting people back to work if they want to qualify for welfare, however I do not believe that forcing this on individuals, especially those that do not have access to the same resources that affluent individuals have access to, is good domestic policy of the United States. Before the United States Department of Agriculture makes a decision on this issue, I would like to urge you all to visit communities that live in poverty to see their stances on this issue. I urge you all to visit homeless communities, where individuals do not have access to the same resources that other individuals have access to, for the purpose as to finding out their opinions on this issue. I also urge you all to conduct research on whether those indigent communities, including individuals that are able-body adults in which live in those communities, have access to job opportunities, job development, job growth and transportation for individuals to get and to keep those things, instead of just assuming that all able-body adults are able to work and that they have access to jobs through employment and through some type of transportation method for their current or their prospective employment opportunities.


Respectfully,

Isaiah X. Smith³

¹ Typically, individuals that identify as a veteran and homeless are not young adults and they are older adults.

² I do understand that some individuals in the United States misunderstand the intent of welfare and that the intent of welfare should be to help individuals get out of poverty and to not keep them in poverty. While I do believe that some individuals should be exempt from this, especially if they have some type of disability, I do believe that the United States Department of Agriculture do need to help individuals get out of poverty.

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