

Commission Member: Cherie Jamason in Collaboration with Western Region Anti-Hunger Coalition

Recommendation for reducing VLFS			<i>Directive to RTI & Cost Considerations</i>		<i>Hearings / Field Visits</i>	
	Potential Impact on VLFS	Rationale / Evidence	Gaps in knowledge	Data needed	Evidence needed from field	Other
1. Establish SNAP benefits based on Low-Cost Food Plan (LCFP).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moving to the LCFP would lift SNAP food purchasing power for all 43 million Americans who have net incomes below 100% of FPL¹ and receive SNAP. The LCFP would raise the maximum SNAP benefit by approximately \$200/month.² Moving to the LCFP would increase jobs in communities where SNAP recipients shop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SNAP allotment amount is associated with decrease in VLFS.³ Families reporting VLFS spend 91% relative to Thrifty Food Plan cost, hence more funds for food through SNAP will reduce VLFS.⁴ Institute of Medicine (IOM) research shows that the Thrifty Food Plan is not sufficient to eat a healthy diet and prevent hunger.^{5,6} Feeding America’s Hunger in America Study reveals that families on SNAP experience food insecurity at the end of the benefit month.⁷ According to the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS), for every \$1 billion in SNAP, between 8,900 and 17,900 jobs are created. The IOM further documents a 16 month lag in which the Thrifty Food Plan benefits are eroded by inflation.⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It would also likely increase participation in SNAP in communities that are currently under-participating. It is unclear by how much. Because grocery jobs would be created, some previously unemployed Americans would “income out of SNAP.” It is unclear how many. With many parts of the nation experiencing serious drought and other climate effects on agriculture,⁹ food costs may become less predictable and even rise more quickly in the future.¹⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there regional differences in food prices that should be accounted for if the indexing method is used? (i.e. Western States drought has increased household water expenses). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hearings on the impact of hunger to Americans – where people experiencing hunger can testify. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would require law change or demonstration project approval. Low-Cost Food Plan
2. Move the gross income test to 200% for all households and allow states with higher gross income for Medicaid to align SNAP and Medicaid.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the SNAP gross income does not increase the program’s net income test of 100%, but allows working families and families with a disabled or elderly family member to more easily meet the net income test through earned income deduction, childcare deduction and excess shelter cost deductions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It would increase the number of working families with small children and families with disabled or elderly members in the program. According to ERS, an increase in SNAP participation by 5% would result in 2.1 million low-income Americans receiving \$973 million in SNAP benefits, generating \$1.8 billion in new economic activity.¹¹ The most common reason for leaving SNAP is employment.¹² The prevalence of VLFS is significantly higher for those who left SNAP in prior 1-2 yrs.¹³ According to a report by Half in Ten, the average cost of full-time childcare ranges from \$3,600 to \$18,200.¹⁴ Aligning SNAP and Medicaid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the magnitude of effect if income disregard is changed? What are differences by state/region? Do minimum wage differences by state, locality, or job type have an effect? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many states have Medicaid rates higher than 200% of FPL, how much and which are they? How many states currently use the state SNAP Broad Based Eligibility (BBCE) option. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would cost saving efficiencies realized through alignment of SNAP and Medicaid gross income tests be helpful to programs, specifically with regard to participation and churn rates? If so, how does this also reduce hunger? We should hear from State Administrators of Programs about how this would help cut red-tape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would require law change to move to 200% nationally but only program waiver approval to tether to Medicaid.

<p>3. Change the measure of unemployment rate for SNAP to the unemployment insurance rate for low-income communities (which is much higher).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of 2011, more than 10% of SNAP recipients are able-bodied adults without children (ABAWDs)¹⁶ who must be employed after 3 months of a 3-year period, except when state or regional unemployment is high.¹⁷ Current law requires measurement of area's average UI, not the UI impacting the SNAP-eligible population. This would reduce VLFS among ABAWDs who live in communities with high inequality where job markets vary greatly. 	<p>eligibility requirements would create program efficiency and cost savings¹⁵ by improving eligibility staff's ability to understand and enforce requirements, while increasing access and reducing barriers for eligible applicants to enroll themselves in both programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving SNAP is associated with a decrease in VLFS.¹⁸ According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, only 12 states have a cash aid program serving ABAWDs who are not disabled. This means they are unemployed and SNAP may be their only resource to reduce hunger.¹⁹ When people who are unable to find work and have no other income for food, they can rely only on the emergency food system, a system that has clearly articulated its inability to meet the food gap.²⁰ According to ERS, for every \$1 billion in SNAP, between 8,900 and 17,900 jobs are created.²¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the difference between UI and UI for low-income workers in cities like San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, Seattle, which are slated to lose their ABAWD waiver in 2015? Are there any studies associated with the effectiveness of mandatory work requirements for people for whom there are no jobs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the loss in SNAP benefits that will result from expiring SNAP ABAWD waivers and how many jobs does this equate to? How has the job market changed for very low-income Americans since the ABAWD work requirement was enacted? Is there another way to support work rather than a work-first model in this new economy? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence from successful SNAP E&T programs and WIOA programs about what incentives and supports work best for populations with high unemployment residing in communities with high inequality and, therefore, lower average UI. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would require law change or waiver approval.
<p>4. Remove the shelter deduction cap on SNAP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SNAP allotment amounts are determined based on income after deductions, including housing costs that are more than 30% of the programs adjusted gross income. For most households, this is capped (\$490/month). By removing the shelter cap, we allow the calculations to determine the true 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High housing costs and low rental vacancy rates across the country have resulted in increases in VLFS.²² The SNAP excess shelter deduction has increased by only \$31 since 2010,²³ - less than 10% in 4 years - while rents in some communities are increasing more than 10% a year in the West.²⁴ The SNAP excess shelter deduction has never reflected the reality of low-income Americans living where rental costs are high and this is even more true today in Western Region states, where rental vacancy rates are at record lows due to the housing foreclosures and failure of the Federal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many SNAP recipients currently have shelter costs higher than the cap? How many people would be newly eligible (because they met the gross income test but not the net income test, but have high housing costs)? Impact of shelter deduction cap on families with children (likely to have higher housing costs). Will housing costs continue to be significantly higher as a percentage of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of SNAP recipients claiming shelter expenses and regional variations. Market rate for affordable housing by region (maybe using Census CS level report for urban and suburban areas). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field hearings about the impact on low rental vacancy rates on hunger & food insecurity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would require law change or demonstration project approval. Rental Vacancy Rates reports.²⁸ Reports of housing doubling up and impact on children.²⁹ WRAP Housing Report.³⁰

	<p>excess shelter costs resulting in increased allotments and eligibility in communities with high housing costs (like in the West).</p>	<p>Government to invest in the creation of affordable housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SNAP allotment amounts are associated with decrease in VLFS.²⁵ • Institute of Medicine research shows the Thrifty Food Plan is not sufficient to eat a healthy diet and prevent hunger.²⁶ • Feeding America’s Hunger in America Study reveals that families on SNAP experience food insecurity at the end of the benefit month.²⁷ 	<p>income than they were when the cap was established?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many households benefiting from this change would have young children, another vulnerable population with the need for special housing accommodations (safe neighborhood, no lead paint, etc.) but whose shelter deduction is capped under the current policy? 			
<p>5. Allow medical deduction to be used for all people– not just the elderly and disabled.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SNAP allotment amounts are determined based on income after deductions, including medical costs that exceed \$35 for all household members who are elderly and disabled. Now that all households are required to have health care insurance and some must pay deductibles and premiums, this deduction should apply to all people with verified medical expenses higher than \$35. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a 2013 survey of food bank customers, Feeding America found that nearly two-thirds (66%) had to choose between food and medicine on a regular basis.³¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are VLFS average medical costs for different household compositions – individuals, families with small and older children, and adult couples? • What are the public health benefits of supporting families to afford food and medical care (vaccinations, medication, etc.)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are average costs of low-income Households on medical care and preventative health? How is this expected to change or not change due to ACA? • How is access to health care or preventative health limiting economic mobility, employability, life span or quality of life for low-income Americans? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many people currently receive medical deduction for SNAP and how much more in benefits do they receive because of it? How do these benefits reduce VLFS? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require law change or demonstration project approval.
<p>6. Establish a pilot of sibling breakfast eligibility so that school breakfast programs could serve all area children with eligible pupils.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With early childhood education slots underfunded and too many young children starting the day without breakfast, a sibling breakfast program piloted in schools of older sibling could serve the dual purpose of helping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally, as of 2012-13 only 43% of low-income children who receive free or reduced lunches also participate in the National School Breakfast Program.³² • Eating breakfast helps all children prepare for a day of learning, whether or not they are in school.³³ • Families with young children face high rates of food insecurity.³⁴ • Experiencing hunger for a young child is dangerous for their health and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do any such programs pair feeding with age-appropriate enrichment such as circle time or sensory development? • Could this pilot be implemented in conjunction with after-the-bell strategies? • Would this be more successful if piloted with a supper program? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What evaluation data and recommendations exist from current pilots? • What percentage of young families live in dense urban or suburban settings within walking distance from school centers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any other ideas for how to reduce missed meals among very young children that could be erected as quickly or with as minimal resources? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require law change or demonstration project approval. • This program might be even more effective in improving school readiness if it was accompanied by

	<p>children ages 1-5 with FRPM-eligible siblings with a free meal in school cafeterias and increase school readiness.</p>	<p>development and may impair a child's school readiness and success in school once they are attending.³⁵</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing participation in school breakfast reduces the price-per-meal for school district administrators.³⁶ 				<p>a morning reading circle or other activities geared toward younger siblings.</p>
<p>7. Remove the requirement that Native Americans can only receive FDPIR <i>or</i> SNAP – allow receipt of both.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This would reduce VLFS among Native Americans, one of the populations with the highest food insecurity rate³⁷ and support economic development on and near Reservations and Rancherias by removing a hard-to-monitor rule that Native Americans cannot receive federal Native American Commodity Food assistance and SNAP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Native Americans are among the most food insecure Americans.³⁸ Rancherias and Reservations are usually in rural communities (at least in the West)³⁹ which already struggle with high food insecurity and few options. The Institute of Medicine has found that SNAP benefits are not enough to ensure adequate nutrition for anyone, and this under-resourcing of food assistance is multiplied in very rural communities that have additional barriers to food sourcing and economic prosperity.⁴⁰ Native American Children could better access school meals if determined categorically eligible for SNAP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expertise on gaps in knowledge on how to serve Native American populations should come from consultation with Native American leaders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Native American Leaders should be consulted about and inform this recommendation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Native American Leaders should be consulted about and inform this recommendation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would require law change or demonstration project approval.
<p>8. Establish a National Paid Family Leave Insurance Program with Progressive Wage Replacement (higher % for poorer workers).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Family and Medical Insurance Leave Act (Senator Gillibrand & Rep. Rosa DeLauro) would ensure up to 12 weeks of paid leave each year to qualifying workers for the birth or adoption of a new child, the serious illness of an immediate family member, or a worker's own medical condition. This would reduce VLFS because it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only 11 percent of workers in the U.S. have access to paid family leave through their employers. A recent study found that women who take paid leave are 39 percent less likely to receive public assistance and 40 percent less likely to receive food stamps in the year following a child's birth. According to a study by Legal Momentum, the United States is virtually alone among other high-income countries in not setting a minimal standard for paid sick days, and is in the minority in not providing paid family leave. It would also reduce job loss among people who, today, are forced to leave a job to care for a sick family member, infant, or elderly parent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How much in elder care Medicaid savings could be expected from allowing family members to provide for an elderly parent? Since women who take leave for the birth of a new child are 39% less likely to rely on public benefits, how much would be saved in public benefits from this. Could child wellbeing be further benefited by coordinating this insurance plan with young-child home visit programs currently provided through TANF & Medicaid? What would be the further 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many workers would this impact nationwide? What would be an appropriate taper of income replacement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the lessons learned from California, where workers, parent & caregivers and the business community just celebrated the 10 year anniversary of their PFL Insurance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would require law change FAMILY Act is S. 1810/H.R. 3712.

	<p>would reduce the number of unpaid days workers took to care for a family member who is an infant, is elderly, disabled or has a long-term illness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to CLASP, Paid Family Leave doubles breast feeding rates among poor workers. Nothing is more important to infants in reducing hunger and support lifelong healthy weight than breast milk.⁴¹ 	<p>hunger-reducing and BMI-lowering power of this policy change?</p>			
<p>9. Support work among SNAP families with small children by allowing E&T to cover costs of childcare for employment for more than 3 months following employment and allow states to draw down 100% reimbursement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With early childhood education slots underfunded and too many young children without care while their parents are at work, extending childcare to SNAP recipients is an efficient way to support work among SNAP recipients and future educational and earnings potential of children who experience poverty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By supporting work among low-income families with small children, SNAP recipient households will be less likely to remain on aid for the average 2 years, because they will be less likely to remain poor. • In addition to supporting work among low-income parents, offering child care to very young children increases their likelihood of starting their day off with a healthy breakfast or to receive a mid-day meal that meets all of the daily nutritional targets through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). • In addition to reducing hunger among children today, early childhood education puts children on a path out of poverty before they even start to crawl, reducing VLFS in out years.^{42,43,44} • There is strong empirical evidence that families that have SNAP reduced or cut due to minor increases in income report higher rates of VLFS.^{45,46} • SNAP allotment amounts are associated with a decrease in VLFS.⁴⁷ • The most common reason for leaving SNAP is employment.⁴⁸ • Prevalence of VLFS is significantly higher for those who left SNAP in the last 1 to 2 yrs.⁴⁹ • Non-standard work arrangements associated with increased VLFS.⁵⁰ • According to report by Half in Ten, the average cost of full-time childcare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are any states currently using SNAP E&T to support work or work training w/ child care? If so, how is it funded? • What are the barriers to this approach, other than SNAP E&T rule limiting post-employment support. • Are there other National funds for child care for working SNAP recipients that would work better? If so, what are they? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many children younger than 11 live in SNAP recipient households? • What are the costs associated with child care, including variations for age, special needs and region expenses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is hunger further reduced among children who benefit from CACFP when attending childcare? • Do we know how access to childcare reduces dependence on public assistance and can we estimate the savings? • How many child care jobs are created for every \$1 Million spent in child care and would these families also earn enough to prevent public benefit receipt? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require law change or demonstration project approval.

<p>10. Require implementation of America's Full Employment Rights.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Humphry-Hawkins Full Employment Act requires investment in job creation when unemployment is above 4%. • HR 1000 would fund implementation of the Humphry-Hawkins Full Employment Law by establishing two large-scale work programs funded by a wall-street tax. • This would reduce VLFS among adults who are able-bodied, their dependents and their community overall. 	<p>ranges from \$3,600 to \$18,200.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 4 million Americans count themselves as long-term unemployed, more than any time on record before 2007. Though this number is declining, most of the decline is a result of people leaving the job market, not because people are finding new jobs. • More than 80% of low-income youth have no job⁵¹, are not enrolled in college or vocational training, and have no prospects for work. • The most direct way to end hunger for out-of-work able-bodied adults is to help them secure full-time work at a wage higher than the poverty rate.⁵² • The small business sector, especially newly created firms,⁵³ account for nearly two thirds of job creation in our economy.⁵⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the ROI on ARRA job creation investments, their economic multiplier effects, and their impact on public assistance programs? • How would full employment reduce dependence on public benefits? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What infrastructure for piloting, evaluating and sharing successful models for job creation is necessary? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the most proven state models for job creation that emerged from the ARRA investments? • What job investment programs have been proven at the city level but could be scaled up or exported? • What types of innovative programs already exist, such as tax credits for small businesses that create new jobs, that are easily implemented by governments?⁵⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require law change (HR 1000).
<p>11. Require SNAP to cover 100% of a household's food costs determined by food plan (not just supplement them) in states where TANF benefits are below median housing costs & for people who have no income.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SNAP currently only supplements the food budget established by the Thrifty Food Plan. However, some households have no income with which to cover additional food expenses of this already very meager food budget. • This would reduce VLFS among the 42% of SNAP Households that live below 50% of the federal poverty line.⁵⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over <u>4 million Americans</u> count themselves as long-term unemployed, more than any time on record before 2007. Though this number is declining, most of the decline is a result of <u>people leaving the job market</u>, not because people are finding new jobs. • According to CBPP, only 12 states have a general assistance program for adults without children.⁵⁷ • According to CBPP, while basic needs grants for poor families under AFDC were about 80% of the federal poverty line (FPL), no state has a maximum basic needs grant for a poor family that is greater than 50% of the Federal Poverty Line. In most states, the average is much less. • According to CBPP,⁵⁸ nearly every state uses full family sanctions that leave children without basic needs assistance when their parents have met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much would this be by household size? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many SNAP households have no other income to cover the remaining food budget? • How long do these families have no other resource? • How many of these families have children? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are SNAP recipients with no income getting by and what other accommodations in SNAP or federal food assistance might help them? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require law change or demonstration project approval.

		<p>the lifetime limit of aid or are not complying with work requirements. If adults in these families are unable to secure work, they will not have the money to supplement a SNAP food budget.</p>				
<p>12. Repeal the lifetime ban on SNAP & TANF when complying with probation or parole (including drug counseling/tests if required for probation or parole).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal law requires states to ban people with prior drug felony convictions from SNAP and TANF. • Eliminating this ban for people who are complying with probation or parole would reduce VLFS among some of the Nation's most vulnerable families.^{59,60,61} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 14 states retain the ban.^{62,63} • Access to basic needs support services and jobs has been shown to reduce recidivism by 83%.⁶⁴ • Repealing the ban has received support of law-enforcement, district attorneys and bi-partisan state legislators and U.S. Senators. • TANF families are more likely to stay on aid longer when a parent is ineligible, according to the Public Policy Institute of California.⁶⁵ • A study of the SNAP ban in California found that 18% of disqualified applicants are parents of children under the age of 2, with a staggering 30% of ineligible parents having children between the ages of 2 and 6 years old. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many people can we estimate this represents? • How much would this policy reduce prison costs associated with recidivism? • How much in resources could be redirected to support rehabilitation centers (currently denied this aid too due to the ban)? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have states that have repealed the ban experienced problems after doing so? • Can states that have repealed the ban offer lessons learned to make repeal most successful? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require law change or demonstration project approval. • Repealing the lifetime ban on TANF and SNAP not only reduces hunger, but is also known to reduce recidivism and crime.⁶⁶ Repeal of the ban also had editorial support from the New York Times⁶⁷ and the Los Angeles Times.⁶⁸
<p>13. Allow summer lunch Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) in all localities that can establish a need.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The USDA has recently finished piloting "Summer Lunch EBT" projects which provide parents with summer lunch stipends via EBT card to make up for missed school meals. The pilots have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countless reports by pediatricians and public health professionals have documented the effects of child hunger.⁷⁰ This research has shown that even one incident of hunger can impact the life chances of a child.^{71,72} Specifically, children who experience hunger are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More often ill, and more likely to be hospitalized (the costs of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the potential for Summer EBT to reduce summer hunger, especially in places with low SNAP participation and/or without access to effective summer programming? • How can outreach to promote Summer EBT be used to also create awareness of and boost 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there best practices from pilot sites that have not been documented? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require law change. • Help Them Eat at Home: Why the Federal Summer Meals Program for Kids has Chronically Low

	demonstrated that these Summer Lunch EBT Projects reduce VFLS among some of the poorest children by 33%. ⁶⁹	<p>which are passed along to the business community as insurance and tax burdens);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More likely to experience growth impairment that precludes their reaching their full physical potential; and, ○ More likely to incur developmental impairments that limit their physical, intellectual and emotional development. 	<p>participation at local summer feeding sites that include programming and enrichment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Could we quantify the reduction in the summer learning gap when summer lunch is averted and does it change by age group? 			Participation and What Can Be Done about It. ⁷³
14. Require states to establish plans to meet participation rates in school child hunger programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● By holding states accountable to achieve high participation rates in school-based child nutrition programs, VFLS will reduce among children.⁷⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Every low-income child in America is eligible for free school meals, afterschool suppers and summer lunch. Many pre-kinder children can receive supplemental food packages through WIC. Families with small children can receive SNAP to supplement their food budget. There is no reason why 16 million kids should go hungry in America. ● States should be held accountable for ensuring that poor children do not go hungry because they did not receive the federally funded food that was intended to prevent it. ● Countless reports by pediatricians and public health professionals have documented the effects of child hunger. This research has shown that even one incident of hunger can impact the life chances of a child.⁷⁵ ● Specifically, children who experience hunger are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sick more often, and more likely to have to be hospitalized. ○ More likely to experience growth impairment that precludes their reaching their full physical potential; and ○ More likely to incur developmental impairments that limit their physical, intellectual and emotional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What process is needed to create effective state plans that include actionable steps which can be evaluated and provide accountability? ● What is the relationship between saturation of charter schools and non-public schools and school meals participation among eligible students, and are there suggested policies that address this issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Effectiveness of existing state plans to raise participation, especially in state versus county-led contexts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Some states and/or districts are achieving success in increasing participation rates in school breakfast programs through after-the-bell programs. What could we learn from those efforts? And, are there any other similarly effective new strategies? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Would require law change or demonstration project approval.
15. Disabled veterans should be deemed disabled in SNAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Allowing Veterans who have a (first-time) pending disability decision with the US Department of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, the term “disabled” has particular meanings that condition a household’s eligibility for SNAP and program work requirement. Applicants with this status are able to deduct their 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How does hunger impact disabled veterans’ mental and physical condition? ● How is hunger among veterans contributing to high suicide rates among 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Estimate on how many veterans this policy would impact (i.e. how many vets are pending decisions and are estimated to have low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are there any models of connecting county/state administered means tested assistance with VA administered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Would require law change or demonstration project approval. ● California’s

<p>while VA disability status is pending.</p>	<p>Veterans Affairs to be considered disabled for the purposes of SNAP eligibility and work requirements will reduce hunger among Veterans and their families.</p>	<p>excess medical and do not have a cap on their housing expenses. They also have the benefits of a protected class status, including special assistance in applying for benefits. Currently, a disabled veteran is not considered disabled for the purposes of the SNAP program unless they are receiving veteran's disability benefits and rated by the VA as having a service or non-service connected disability that is total or debilitating.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many veterans who would qualify under the current SNAP rules are pending their disability claim as a result of the VA's crippling backlog of unprocessed disability claims. Regional offices such as those in Oakland, Los Angeles, and Seattle where backlogs are the worst are averaging waits of 320 days, while the national goal has become a mere 125 days to process claims. • Recently, we have learned of the extreme understaffing of Veterans Health Centers, which contributes to this problem. 	<p>veterans?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any other changes that could be made in SNAP to prevent hunger among veterans and should VA play any role in providing outreach to Veterans and their families? • What is the most recent wait-time for pending disability decisions from VA, following a change in leadership? 	<p>incomes).</p>	<p>services or benefits?</p>	<p>waiver request for this was denied.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congressional Legislation has been introduced by Rep Vargas & Rep Speier, but no action has been taken.
<p>16. "Untick" Months on the National 60 Month Clock for TANF for any month "ticked" during the Great Recession and require states to prove the effectiveness of Welfare-to-Work Programs as condition of setting lifetime eligibility below the federal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults can only receive 60 months of aid under federal TANF rules. • By allowing adults to restore months of eligibility that were lost during the worst recession of our lifetime, we not only reduce VLFS, but we also restore essential work training and support that can help families escape poverty permanently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of child poverty has been proven to be more detrimental to the health of a child than neo-natal cocaine exposure.⁷⁶ • A recent report by the California Attorney General found that poverty was a significant, if not the most significant, driver of poor school attendance.⁷⁷ • Toxic stress is associated with deep poverty.^{78,79,80} • States are required to demonstrate "Work Participation Rate (WPI)" and little consideration was given for states that maintained a safety net for this population during the worst recession of our lifetime. No state has been required to demonstrate that the "Welfare-to-Work" services provided actually result in increased likelihood of sustainable employment or document long-term outcomes of wage / earnings of their participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many families expired months during deep recession? • How are these families faring now and how many would benefit in reengaging in TANF Subsidized Jobs Work Support or Work Training Programs? • What resources would be necessary to reengage these families on a path back to work after a long period of unemployment and a changed work environment? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any experiences from the ARRA Subsidized Job experience that could help us design a plan for these families? • What else do we know about these families and the communities where they live? • How many families expired months during deep recession? • Are there any plans for this population left behind by the deep recession? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TANF Benefits in all states are below 50% of FPL.⁸²

<p>maximum of 60 months on aid.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many states cut TANF lifetime limits during the recession.⁸¹ 				
<p>17. Add an exemption to student SNAP ineligibility for every student who is homeless or whose FAFSA score is below SNAP eligibility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current SNAP law denies aid to students enrolled half-time or more in college, unless they meet one of the exemptions. • By adding students who are homeless and students from poor families⁸³ (defined by FAFSA) to the list of those students exempt from this rule, and therefore eligible for SNAP food benefits, VLFS is reduced and so is future dependency on the SNAP program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When children born into the bottom fifth of the income distribution get a college degree, their chances of making it to the top fifth nearly quadruple, and their chances of making it out of the bottom increase by more than 50 percent.⁸⁴ • An increasing number of low-income college students are experiencing hunger, making it difficult for them to graduate.^{85,86,87} • Opportunities for low-income high school graduates to escape poverty and climb into the middle class by attaining a college degree have narrowed over the past two decades.⁸⁸ Several reports have documented the decline in low-income students attending college. Meanwhile, college students from low-income families who do attend college, are less able to finish and more likely to be strapped with unbearable debt if they do graduate.^{89,90} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many students might be in this category? • What would be the best way to verify homelessness and/or FAFSA eligibility? • Are there any proposed changes to the FAFSA process that would impact this suggested policy change? • How could this policy change reduce future dependence on public benefits? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have states which have focused on increasing participation among college students who are poor learned about serving this population? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require administrative action. • FAFSA measures parental income. • This would complement the goal of high FAFSA completion rate as a goal of higher education institutions.
<p>18. Support sustainable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will reduce VLFS by reducing the likelihood of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-third of working families – more than 10 million American families – do not earn enough to make ends meet.⁹¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the impact on public benefits from jobs lost due to lack of sick days? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many workers in America do not have access to paid sick days? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • California is first to implement paid sick day right and soon will 	

<p>employment by establishing the right to paid sick days for every worker below the Supplemental Poverty Rate.</p>	<p>missed days of work due to illness and loss of employment resulting when a work absence cannot be avoided as a result of illness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most workers will need to take time away from work now and then to attend to a personal or family illness. Though paid sick leave is considered by most Americans to be a basic worker right, more than 40 percent of people in the private sector workforce—including 81 percent of low-wage workers—don't receive a single day of paid sick leave. Even worse, nearly 25 percent of workers polled said that they have lost a job or were told they would lose a job for taking time off to due to a personal or family illness. Low-income families who lose a job are likely to make up the loss of income by applying for government safety-net programs if they are not already enrolled.⁹² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the public health impact of sick day laws and impact on food borne illness? 		<p>have lessons learned from that experience.</p>	
<p>19. Mandate that 70 percent of all TANF funds shall be used for “payments to families” to meet the basic needs of the family.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of VLFS among children in high poverty areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SNAP is a supplemental program for food assistance. TANF is the only program that is designed to meet the basic survival needs of families with children. TANF replaces the former AFDC program. The AFDC program used 70 percent of the total funds for “payments to families.” TANF only uses 30% for “payments to families.” This results in severe food insecurity. When the SNAP supplemental benefits run out, families have no money to buy food. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many children are receiving SNAP as the only source of income because they have timed out or are subject to TANF full-family or partial workfare sanctions? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data to show that families receiving TANF and families with no income because of TANF time limits and full family sanctions or partial workfare sanctions have a greater degree of food insecurity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any kind of state data that can be collected that is available on the balance of funds used on payments to families versus program costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require law change.
<p>20. Raise the minimum wage, and establish a National Standard for Livable Wages (regional) and require this wage for government and businesses of a certain size.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families that earn a living wage do not need to rely on government assistance programs to prevent hunger. • By requiring a living wage, we can expect VLFS to be reduced among the Americans who live in a family that has earnings from work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research shows that increasing incomes is the single most effective strategy for moving public benefit recipients into the workforce and preventing them from returning to public benefits when they have left.⁹³ • With a proliferation of low-wage work, over 25 percent of jobs in the nation pay less than the federal poverty line for a family of four, and 50 percent pay less than \$34,000 a year. Increasing the minimum wage achieves the twin goals of maintaining a wage floor to keep workers out of poverty, and stimulating the consumer spending necessary for economic recovery and future growth. • In a 2011 study conducted by the Chicago Federal Reserve Bank, a one dollar increase in the minimum wage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the most effective models for establishing a regionally-based pay equity scheme? • What are the most effective strategies to regionally implement wage policies for employers of different employee sizes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using existing research on ‘cliff effects’ as a basis, investigating most effective points at which wage-increases minimize potential unemployment and maximize reduction in public benefit usage? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several municipalities have increased the wage significantly. What have we learned from those increases? Which of those lessons can and cannot be applied to a national job market? • California has no tipped wage differential – has that reduced the profitability or proliferation of California’s restaurant industry? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require law change. • HR 1010 would increase the wage for tipped and non-tipped workers and is a good first step.

		<p>for a worker resulted in \$2,800 in new consumer spending by his or her household over the following year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the minimum wage will help, but we shouldn't stop there. America should seek to restore the full purchasing power of the minimum wage, which would be \$21.72 an hour if it had kept pace with worker productivity, to guarantee each worker a decent standard of living, reduce the reliance of government safety-net programs and infuse our economy with more confident consumers. 				
<p>21. Protecting take home pay, assets and credit scores by establishing stronger financial protections against predatory lending / banking practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By protecting take home pay, assets and credit scores of low-income consumers, and preventing predatory loans America can reduce VLFS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to the Center for Responsible Lending, the interest rate on a two-week, \$300 payday loan is 459% APR. There are 4-5 average loans taken per year. Money spent on payday loans, overdraft fees and other financial services marketed to low-income families with predatory interest rates may help families to meet a financial crisis once, but end up costing the family more than they can afford in the future, putting them in a cycle of increasing debt and hardship. Many employers of low-wage workers are turning to prepaid cards rather than issuing paychecks. While prepaid cards may improve ability of low-income working families to avoid check-cashing fees and increase payment options for workers who do not have a bank account, not all basic needs can be paid with a card (ie rent, childcare). Federal and state watchdog agencies should continue to define financial services regulations that protect these most vulnerable consumers. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would require law change or administrative action. Areas of federal focus may include: EITC payment issuance protections, stronger federal registry relief policies, enforcing consumer report rights for public benefit recipients, establishing high standards for prepaid accounts and loans (car, small value and home).
<p>22. The US Department of Transportation should establish a program to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VLFS among children, elderly and disabled Americans would be reduced significantly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 23.5 million Americans live in urban food deserts and 2.3 million living in rural food deserts (more than 10 miles from a grocer) and must find transportation to go grocery shopping or eat lesser quality food.⁹⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What would be the best method for distribution of transportation support? Could it be delivered through EBT card those who are SNAP eligible? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are any communities subsidizing public transportation for the poor and what are their experiences? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would require law change or administrative action. Investing in public

<p>subsidize public transportation for SNAP recipients.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 43%⁹⁵ of children who are eligible for breakfast and 85%⁹⁶ of children eligible for summer meals do not receive them. Transportation is cited as a primary barrier.^{97,98} • The cost of a bus pass can represent a significant expenditure in a budget of low-income families. • Even in urban communities, but especially in rural communities and for parents of small children, access to transportation increases the likelihood of employment and a road out of poverty.^{99,100,101} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What “side-effect” benefits could be expected? • Could access to transportation support educational aspirations and success among low-income youth or job retention and participation of adults thereby reducing future SNAP dependence? • Would transportation subsidies create job growth in the green-jobs-oriented public transportation sector? 		<p>transportation reduces greenhouse gasses and air quality in low-income neighborhoods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing in public transportation for young adults and children builds support for public transportation ridership before people can become entrenched in car ownership.
<p>23. Federal USDA should better support food hubs, especially for rural communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing funding to existing food hub initiatives like Know Your Farmer: Know Your Food can reduce VLFS by strengthening local employment opportunities,¹⁰² building affordable food access and promoting sustainable food systems. • Increasing the number of Native American Food Hubs can reduce VLFS among Native population who suffer from the highest levels of food insecurity and strengthen historically threatened agricultural systems that produce culturally appropriate foods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting food hubs serves three essential purposes of (1) strengthening our existing agricultural production, aggregation and distribution systems;¹⁰³ growing institutional connections between farming and market regions through “farm to fork/table” initiatives; and (3) bolstering our national capacity to reduce VLFS among rural and urban populations. • The United States is estimated to have a three to four-day food supply that is vulnerable to disruption with massive potential for urban and rural hunger. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What coordinating role can local and regional organizations like food policy councils play in managing food hubs?¹⁰⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require law change and or demonstration project, and new investments.

<p>24. Reevaluate National Farm Subsidies in order to improve nutritional quality of food available for people with limited incomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run a pilot to track the impact of an alternative subsidy program that focuses on diverse, regionally appropriate crops with higher nutritional value. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidized support for a few crops (wheat, corn, soy) has compelled farmers to ignore other crops such as fruits, vegetables, and other grains. The market is flooded with products made from the highly subsidized crops, including sweeteners in the form of high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) and fats in the form of hydrogenated fats made from soybeans. This flood, in turn, drives down the prices of fattening fare such as prepackaged snacks, ready-to-eat meals, fast food, corn-fed beef and pork, and soft drinks. Worse yet, some scientists say, paltry support for foods other than these staples increases the contrast between prices of fat-laden, over sweetened foods and those of healthier alternatives, offering income-consumers little choice but to stock their pantries with less nutritious foods.^{105,106} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion and data on the transitional impacts of shifting from current big 3: corn, soy, and wheat to nutrient dense and diverse crop subsidies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track impact of shifts in funds for crop insurance and subsidy programs in the 2014 Farm Bill on industry as a basis for further transition from commodity to diverse, regionally appropriate specialty crops. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The American Medical Association in a resolution passed by the AMA House of Delegates in 2007: “RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association support efforts (1) to reduce health disparities by basing food assistance programs on the health needs of their constituents, (2) to provide vegetables, fruits, legumes, grains, vegetarian foods, and healthful nondairy beverages in school lunches and food assistance programs, and (3) to ensure that federal subsidies encourage the consumption of products low in fat and cholesterol.”
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<p>25. Formative research to develop and reinforce solutions for rural hunger, rural food isolation and declining rural communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The implementation of programs that strengthen the ability of VLFS to access affordable, healthy foods in rural and remote communities. • Codify farm to Institution policies. • Allow for regional specific waivers allowing for alternatives to congregate meal programs.¹⁰⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural Families are faced with extreme barriers to food access: lack of transportation, food availability, the cost of travel.¹⁰⁸ Many of the successful programs in population dense areas do not translate to the unique needs of the rural community. Furthermore, the needs of rural low-income communities are high, and the capacity to serve this population is low. Innovation is needed and welcome. 				
<p>26. Military families shouldn't be denied SNAP due to housing supplement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active-duty military members with families too large to live on base for free are given a Basic Housing Allowance (BHA). By removing the BHA in the calculation of SNAP benefits, we would have the potential to reduce VLFS among low-income military families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active-duty military families face many challenges to feeding their families, including low base income, high expenses related to deployments, the inability to control the money that pays for their off-base living quarters and the unique brand of military stigma associated with receipt of the Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance.¹⁰⁹ • For enlisted soldiers, pay starts at about \$18,000 for new recruits and can reach upward of \$65,000 for some who log more than 18 years in the military. This combined with the high cost of living in many areas could cause great economic strain on a family's basic needs budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many Military families receive the BAH and are estimated to have low incomes? • Which states are most impacted – we believe Western States are among them. • How many military families receive alternative military needs tested assistance? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • San Diego County Hunger Coalition has collected stories of military families denied SNAP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require law change or administrative action. • Active-duty military members w/ families too large to live on base for free are given a Basic Housing Allowance. By removing the BAH in the calculation of SNAP benefits, we would reduce VLFS among low-income military families.
<p>27. Allow states to implement express lane eligibility from Medicaid to SNAP and vice versa.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By allowing for dual enrollment into Medicaid and SNAP, state administrators can reduce VLFS in their states and improve administrative efficiencies in the program and out-year health costs associated with poor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FNS has encouraged at least one state to apply for a “reverse” express lane eligibility waiver from FNS. California is among the states that complied with this request. • By reducing redundant paperwork, approving these express lane waivers would reduce administrative burden, improve timely approvals and minimize churn, thereby reducing hunger. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many states have received a SNAP / Medicaid express lane eligibility waiver from CMS? 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require law, CPS and FNS to approve waivers they have received by state(s).

<p>28. Expand the Women, Infant & Children (WIC) Program to further support health of infants through diaper and water supplements.</p>	<p>nutrition and health.</p>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce hunger among families with babies and toddlers by supplementing WIC packages with diapers and water for children of breast-feeding age. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The WIC Program has proven to reduce hunger and increase breast feeding rates among poor infants and toddlers. Still, families with young children struggle to meet basic needs, and the unpredictability of low-income work schedules and cost of child care forces families to make difficult choices that directly impact the health, food security and future opportunities of their infants and toddlers.¹¹⁰ • Safe drinking water is essential for any parent that breastfeeds. Yet, fewer families have access to potable drinking water in their homes or at their work.¹¹¹ The cost of drinking water is significant and increasing in Western states impacted by drought. This is of concern for all families, but especially for breastfeeding mothers as reduced water consumption will stifle milk supply. • According to the National Diaper Bank Network, infants need approximately 8-12 diapers daily.¹¹² Nursing and diapering go hand-in-hand, yet many low-income parents cannot afford the \$80-180/month in diaper costs and laundry mats do not allow washing of cloth diapers. • Unable to meet diaper needs of their babies, mothers are more likely to experience maternal depression which can interfere with breastfeeding.^{113,114} • Because child care centers require children to be dropped off with diapers, lack of diapers can also interfere with child care and work, blocking a young family's path out of poverty. • By supplementing the WIC package 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The USDA estimates that less than 2% of income should be spent on water. Does this number accurately reflect the reality of low-income parents in drought-stricken areas? Or in areas with water contamination in municipal or well water? • What are the additional water costs for breastfeeding women, especially those who live in communities with restricted water access? • Could this be implemented during EBT implementation or would it have to wait? • What impact would reduced unmet basic needs have on long-term success of poor parents and poor children? 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require law change or budget action.

<p>29. Restore immigrant eligibility for SNAP, TANF and Medicaid for children and adults with legal residency status.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PROWA removed eligibility of non-citizens for health, food and basic needs benefits. ¹¹⁵ • Federal law should reverse the ban to reduce hunger and VFLS. 	<p>with drinking water and diapers, young parents are more likely to succeed in parenting, work and breastfeeding and children will experience hunger less frequently today and better BMI's in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunger and deep poverty increased in households headed by non-citizens (some with citizen children) following PRWORA ¹¹⁶. • 15 states and DC restored benefits for some of immigrant populations, but state budget austerity has narrowed state support for this population in recent years. ¹¹⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will immigration reform impact work opportunities for non-citizens and what will the resulting impact on hunger be? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the cut in non-citizen assistance through TANF, SNAP and Medicaid impact the physical, public and economic health of the communities with high immigrant populations? 	
<p>30. Restore investments in affordable housing and housing supports.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With rental vacancy rates at all-time lows and rental prices not letting up, low-income families are spending over half of their incomes on housing. ¹¹⁸ • Securing affordable housing, especially for families with children, but also for very low-income elderly and disabled Americans, will reduce VFLS by reducing the percentage of income made available for food. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many Americans are homeless. In the wake of the mortgage crisis, rental housing availability dropped to an all-time low, with only 30 low-income housing units available for every 100 families who need them. Federal CDBG funding cuts in the 2012 budget and HUD funding sequestration has magnified the impact of the rental housing shortage by reducing crucial support for shelters and transitional housing. • According to the CBPP, ¹¹⁹ more than half of federal spending on housing supports went to families with incomes above \$100,000 in 2011. • According to Children's Health Watch, children living in subsidized housing are more likely to be food secure than children on the housing assistance wait-list. They also found that food-insecure children living in subsidized housing were 52 percent less likely to be seriously underweight than food-insecure children on the wait list. ¹²⁰ • By redirecting housing investments to restore funding for shelters and transitional housing and to support the creation of affordable homes, permanently ending the sequester for housing programs, restoring the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How could access to affordable housing reduce dependence on public benefits? • How could access to affordable housing improve access to affordable food and community gardens? 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require law change or budget action.

		<p>roughly 70,000 vouchers lost during sequestration and implementing a National renter's tax credit, housing instability could be sharply reduced and the quality of life for all Americans improved.</p>			
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