



ALABAMA GROCERS ASSOCIATION OPPOSITION TO SNAP WAIVERS

The Alabama Grocers Association opposes all efforts to restrict purchases under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), a critical resource for struggling families. Restricting eligible items will quickly drive-up food costs and strangle the program with needless red tape without delivering meaningful public health improvements. This approach creates costly logistical, administrative, and operational challenges for all stakeholders involved.



INCREASED COSTS & ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN

- **ENORMOUS CLASSIFICATION TASK:** The government would need to classify over **600,000 food products** and update this list annually with thousands of new items. This is a monumental task with no guarantee of improving nutrition or public health.
- **RETAILER STRAIN:** Grocery store staff would be forced into the role of "food police," denying purchases to families based on evolving complex rules. This risks public backlash and undermines the retailer-customer relationship.
- **SYSTEMIC DISRUPTION:** Retailers would have to continually re-program point-of-sale systems and invest in employee training, inventory control upgrades, and compliance tracking. Smaller stores, especially those in rural or low-income areas, may not have the resources to keep up.
- **SNAP WAIVER STUDY:** In a September 2025 study by the National Grocers Association, Food Marketing Institute and National Association of Convenience Stores, the up-front costs to implement for supermarkets is **\$305.1 million**, for convenience stores is **\$1.0 billion**, for small format stores is **\$11.8 million** & for supercenters is **\$215.5 million**, for an aggregate total of **\$1.6 billion**. In addition, ongoing costs will exceed **\$750 million**.



LEGAL AND POLICY CONCERNS

- **PATCHWORK OF LAWS:** If states begin adopting unique SNAP rules, multi-state retailers will face a confusing and costly maze of differing compliance requirements. This patchwork would disadvantage both large chain grocers and small independent stores that serve as economic anchors in many communities.
- **UNFUNDED MANDATES:** States would be forced to cover the costs of monitoring, enforcement, and communication with retailers and participants—costs not reimbursed by the federal government.
- **FEDERAL INCONSISTENCY:** Imposing restrictions at the state level could violate federal law and undermine national program integrity. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., should be given the opportunity to consider and implement changes at the federal level to ensure consistency and legality.



NO PROVEN PUBLIC HEALTH BENEFIT

- **HEALTHY EATING OUTCOMES:** Studies have shown that restricting food choices under SNAP does not necessarily lead to healthier eating habits. Without clear evidence of improved outcomes, the harm and costs of such a policy far outweigh any speculative benefits. Programs like SNAP Double Bucks are a way to incentivize healthy eating and promote real change in consumer eating habits.

CONCLUSION

Rather than imposing rigid restrictions that strain resources and confuse participants, efforts should focus on education, access to healthy food, and incentives that empower SNAP participants to make informed choices. Programs like SNAP Double Bucks are designed to create these incentives and are proven to create a healthier lifestyle. A nationally unified approach, rooted in evidence-based strategies, is the only sustainable path forward.



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