



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

- **UNMANAGEABLE SCOPE:** The government would need to classify more than **600,000 food products** and update the list annually with thousands of new items—an enormous undertaking with no clear evidence of improved nutrition or public health outcomes.
- **SIGNIFICANT COSTS:** A September 2025 industry study estimates **\$1.6 billion** in upfront implementation costs across retail formats, plus more than **\$750 million** annually in ongoing expenses. Last year, implementation of Act #2025-304, which reduced sales and use taxes on baby and feminine products, cost grocery retailers approximately **\$1,500** per store—totaling **\$1.2 million** statewide.
- **RETAILER BURDEN:** Grocery employees would effectively become “food police,” denying purchases based on complex, shifting rules—risking customer backlash and damaging retailer–customer relationships.
- **OPERATIONAL DISRUPTION:** Retailers would face constant POS reprogramming, staff training, inventory changes, and compliance tracking, costs that smaller and rural stores may be unable to absorb.



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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