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Subject: comments on Farm Bill
Date Sent: 12/27/2005 04:36:12 CST
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I write to submit comments in support of the upcoming Farm Bill.

- 1) I support the entitlement structure of the Food Stamp Program which responds to increases in need whether due to economic changes or disasters like Katrina or 9/11;
- 2) Make benefit allotments adequate (increase both the minimum benefit and other allotment levels); No one seriously believes that the current thrifty food plan is actually enough to feed people, we must raise benefit levels.
- 3) Expand eligibility to more needy people left out of the program now (including by serving all otherwise eligible legal immigrants, able-bodied adults who now face time limits, ex drug felons making new starts, and others struggling to make ends meet);
- 4) Liberalize resource rules, in order to stop penalizing low income people for trying to save for a cushion to protect themselves in times of greater need, health crisis, or larger disaster;
- 5) Streamline enrollment operations, by funding needed technology and lessening ridiculous documentation requirements; For example, do seniors and disabled people really need to document that they have \$35 per month in medical expenses, and does the local government really need to keep track of their every prescription bill? Can't the program just assume that they do have those expenses and give them benefits accordingly?
- 6) Increase reimbursements (match rates) for state administrative operations;
- 7) Support food stamp outreach;
- 8) Continue to allow recipients choice among food purchases and support healthy choices through nutrition education;
- 9) Continue Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) delivery; and

10) Last, but certainly not least, as recommended in our report attached, ease the application process by encouraging administrators to conduct eligibility interview over the phone and reducing the number of required office visits and time spent waiting for each visit.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Widom

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