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LETTERS

Federal snips at SNAP safety net will hit Mass. families hard

Updated November 19, 2025, 2:30 a.m.



The produce section of Nubian Markets in Boston in August. Customers can use their SNAP benefits and EBT cards to earn discounts on produce through the Boston Double Up Food Bucks program. PAT GREENHOUSE/GLOBE STAFF

In [“Fearing ‘a real gaping hole in the safety net’: Tighter restrictions coming to SNAP”](#) (Page A1, Nov. 12), Julian E.J. Sorapuru identifies that the fear and uncertainty families faced this month over food assistance is far from over. The human-made crisis that paused Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits for [1.1 million Massachusetts residents](#) will become the new normal for approximately [103,000 Bay Staters](#) who could lose eligibility due to changes passed by Congress this summer. More are at risk as the state must newly cover a share of program costs — up to [an estimated \\$431.3 million per year](#) — and the temporary pause in federal benefits during the government shutdown showed that the state cannot absorb that cost.

These changes to SNAP will harm children’s brains and bodies and families’ health across Massachusetts. My work as a child health researcher shows that [families who lose SNAP](#) are [more likely to be food insecure, parents report](#) worse physical and mental health, and children are at a higher risk of developmental delays.

Cutting families off SNAP when costs of living are already out of reach is a recipe for disaster. It will force families to [choose between skipping meals and forgoing other necessities](#), such as rent, utilities, and health care. Our leaders must protect SNAP and buffer families from the cuts’ consequences.

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