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Indiana Food Banks Applaud Proposed SNAP Increase



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Indiana distributed nearly \$144 million in SNAP benefits in July, more than twice the amount than in July 2019. (Adobe Stock)



October 2, 2020

INDIANAPOLIS - Indiana's hunger-fighting network is applauding congressional leaders for boosting food assistance in the latest COVID-19 relief proposal.

The U.S. House approved an [updated Heroes Act](#) late yesterday, which includes a 15% benefit increase for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and \$10 billion to cover increased participation in the program.

At the [Hoosier Hills Food Bank](#), Executive Director Julio Alonso said he's seeing hunger at unprecedented levels, as they've distributed roughly 44% more food than last year.

And he said he doesn't expect demand to fall any time soon.

"It's important for the federal government to get something done as quickly as possible," said Alonso. "It's still going to be months before people can start earning the incomes that they had, start having the childcare that they had, start being able to have their kids in school, and we're going to need some help for a long time to come."

During July, Indiana issued 111% more SNAP benefits than during the same month last year.

The updated Heroes Act also allocates \$3 billion for school and childcare providers, for providing meals during the pandemic. Senate Republicans have opposed the \$2.2 trillion package, claiming it costs too much.

Alonso explained that SNAP is a cost-effective tool to keep families living on the margins afloat. And he contended raising food-assistance benefits will enhance the work of the state's emergency-response network, which has been taxed by the pandemic.

"It's an important supplement or parallel effort to what we're doing at food banks and food pantries," said Alonso. "Because we simply don't have the capacity to feed everyone who needs it, and it's not the most efficient way to do that."

For every meal provided by a Feeding America food bank, SNAP can provide nine.

Alonso noted SNAP also stimulates economic activity, as people spend their benefits in the community at local grocery stores.

Disclosure: Feeding Indiana's Hungry contributes to our fund for reporting on Hunger/Food/Nutrition. If you would like to help support news in the public interest, [click here](#).

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