

VETO MESSAGE: No

GOVERNOR'S PRESS RELEASE ON SIGNING: Yes

FOLLOWING WERE PRINTED:

To check for circulating copies, contact New Jersey State Government Publications at the State Library (609) 278-2640 ext.103 or <mailto:refdesk@njstatelib.org>

REPORTS: No

HEARINGS: No

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES: Yes

SOPHIE NIETO-MUNOZ; newjerseymonitor.com, 'Law increases food assistance payments as federal aid expires N.J. law increases food assistance payments as federal aid expires', *Press of Atlantic City, The* (online), 10 Feb 2023 5A

Brent Johnson - NJ Advance Media, 'Murphy signs food aid boost as federal aid ends', *Jersey Journal, The* (online), 9Feb 2023 016

CL/JA

P.L. 2023, CHAPTER 13, *approved February 8, 2023*
Assembly, No. 5086

1 AN ACT concerning the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program and
2 amending P.L.2022, c.32.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6
7 1. Section 1 of P.L.2022, c.32 (C.44:10-111) is amended to read
8 as follows:

9 1. a. There is established in the Division of Family Development
10 in the Department of Human Services the State SNAP Minimum
11 Benefit Program. Under the program, the division shall distribute to
12 each eligible household a monthly State SNAP benefit equal to the
13 difference between the household's federal SNAP monthly benefit
14 and **[\$50]** \$95, which amount may be increased by the
15 Commissioner of Human Services, as deemed appropriate and
16 subject to available State appropriations. If federal funds become
17 available for the purposes of this subsection, the Commissioner of
18 Human Services shall utilize such federal funds as the primary source
19 for issuing the monthly State SNAP benefit before State funds, if
20 necessary, are expended. The State SNAP benefit shall be provided
21 to an eligible household in addition to the federal SNAP benefit.

22 b. The program shall be subject to the same State rules and
23 procedures for implementing the federal SNAP to the greatest extent
24 possible, including, but not limited to, distributing the State SNAP
25 benefit using the program's Electronic Benefit Transfer system and
26 requiring that benefits be used solely for the purchase of food as
27 defined in 7 U.S.C. s.2012.

28 c. The Commissioner of Human Services shall apply to the Food
29 and Nutrition Service within the United States Department of
30 Agriculture for any necessary waivers or approvals to implement the
31 provisions of this section.

32 d. As used in this section:

33 "Eligible household" means a household that is certified to receive
34 a federal SNAP benefit of at least one dollar per month, but less than
35 **[\$50]** \$95 per month, or a larger amount as deemed appropriated by
36 the Commissioner of Human Services, subject to available State and
37 federal funds.

38 "SNAP" means the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance
39 Program, established pursuant to the federal "Food and Nutrition Act
40 of 2008," Pub.L.110-246 (7 U.S.C. s.2011 et seq.).

41 (cf: P.L.2022, c.32, s.1)

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

2

3

4

STATEMENT

5

6 This bill increases the minimum monthly benefit under the State
7 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Minimum
8 Benefit Program from \$50 to \$95 and authorizes the Commissioner
9 of Human Services to increase the program's benefit amount. SNAP,
10 formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, is a nutrition assistance
11 program that serves as a safety net for low-income households.

12 Base SNAP benefits are provided by the federal government.
13 However, currently under the State SNAP Minimum Benefit
14 Program, State funds are used to ensure each SNAP household
15 receives a minimum monthly SNAP benefit of \$50. This bill amends
16 the governing law of this program to provide that the minimum
17 monthly SNAP benefit is \$95. Moreover, the bill authorizes the
18 Commissioner of Human Services to increase the State SNAP
19 Minimum Benefit Program benefit amount, subject to available State
20 appropriations. The bill also clarifies that if federal funds become
21 available for the purposes of the State SNAP Minimum Benefit
22 Program, the Commissioner of Human Services is required to utilize
23 such federal funds as the primary source for issuing the monthly
24 benefit before State funds, if necessary, are expended.

25

26

27

28

29 Increases minimum monthly benefit under State SNAP Minimum
30 Benefit Program from \$50 to \$95 and authorizes DHS to increase
31 program benefit amount.

ASSEMBLY, No. 5086

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 12, 2023

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman CRAIG J. COUGHLIN

District 19 (Middlesex)

Assemblywoman ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT

District 31 (Hudson)

Assemblywoman YVONNE LOPEZ

District 19 (Middlesex)

Assemblywoman ANNETTE QUIJANO

District 20 (Union)

Assemblywoman SHANIQUE SPEIGHT

District 29 (Essex)

Assemblyman RAJ MUKHERJI

District 33 (Hudson)

Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

Senator NILSA I. CRUZ-PEREZ

District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblymen Benson, Mejia, Assemblywoman Jasey, Assemblymen Freiman, Sampson, Stanley, Assemblywoman Mosquera, Senators Turner, Diegnan, Singleton, Gill, Gopal, Greenstein and Pou

SYNOPSIS

Increases minimum monthly benefit under State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program from \$50 to \$95 and authorizes DHS to increase program benefit amount.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/2/2023)

1 AN ACT concerning the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program and
2 amending P.L.2022, c.32.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6

7 1. Section 1 of P.L.2022, c.32 (C.44:10-111) is amended to read
8 as follows:

9 1. a. There is established in the Division of Family Development
10 in the Department of Human Services the State SNAP Minimum
11 Benefit Program. Under the program, the division shall distribute to
12 each eligible household a monthly State SNAP benefit equal to the
13 difference between the household's federal SNAP monthly benefit
14 and **[\$50]** \$95, which amount may be increased by the
15 Commissioner of Human Services, as deemed appropriate and
16 subject to available State appropriations. If federal funds become
17 available for the purposes of this subsection, the Commissioner of
18 Human Services shall utilize such federal funds as the primary source
19 for issuing the monthly State SNAP benefit before State funds, if
20 necessary, are expended. The State SNAP benefit shall be provided
21 to an eligible household in addition to the federal SNAP benefit.

22 b. The program shall be subject to the same State rules and
23 procedures for implementing the federal SNAP to the greatest extent
24 possible, including, but not limited to, distributing the State SNAP
25 benefit using the program's Electronic Benefit Transfer system and
26 requiring that benefits be used solely for the purchase of food as
27 defined in 7 U.S.C. s.2012.

28 c. The Commissioner of Human Services shall apply to the Food
29 and Nutrition Service within the United States Department of
30 Agriculture for any necessary waivers or approvals to implement the
31 provisions of this section.

32 d. As used in this section:

33 "Eligible household" means a household that is certified to receive
34 a federal SNAP benefit of at least one dollar per month, but less than
35 **[\$50]** \$95 per month, or a larger amount as deemed appropriated by
36 the Commissioner of Human Services, subject to available State and
37 federal funds.

38 "SNAP" means the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance
39 Program, established pursuant to the federal "Food and Nutrition Act
40 of 2008," Pub.L.110-246 (7 U.S.C. s.2011 et seq.).
41 (cf: P.L.2022, c.32, s.1)

42

43 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

STATEMENT

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21

This bill increases the minimum monthly benefit under the State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Minimum Benefit Program from \$50 to \$95 and authorizes the Commissioner of Human Services to increase the program's benefit amount. SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, is a nutrition assistance program that serves as a safety net for low-income households.

Base SNAP benefits are provided by the federal government. However, currently under the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program, State funds are used to ensure each SNAP household receives a minimum monthly SNAP benefit of \$50. This bill amends the governing law of this program to provide that the minimum monthly SNAP benefit is \$95. Moreover, the bill authorizes the Commissioner of Human Services to increase the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program benefit amount, subject to available State appropriations. The bill also clarifies that if federal funds become available for the purposes of the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program, the Commissioner of Human Services is required to utilize such federal funds as the primary source for issuing the monthly benefit before State funds, if necessary, are expended.

ASSEMBLY HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 5086

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 19, 2023

The Assembly Human Services Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 5086.

This bill increases the minimum monthly benefit under the State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Minimum Benefit Program from \$50 to \$95 and authorizes the Commissioner of Human Services to increase the program's benefit amount. SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, is a nutrition assistance program that serves as a safety net for low-income households.

Base SNAP benefits are provided by the federal government. However, currently under the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program, State funds are used to ensure each SNAP household receives a minimum monthly SNAP benefit of \$50. This bill amends the governing law of this program to provide that the minimum monthly SNAP benefit is \$95. Moreover, the bill authorizes the Commissioner of Human Services to increase the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program benefit amount, subject to available State appropriations. The bill also clarifies that if federal funds become available for the purposes of the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program, the Commissioner of Human Services is required to utilize such federal funds as the primary source for issuing the monthly benefit before State funds, if necessary, are expended.

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE
ASSEMBLY, No. 5086
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
220th LEGISLATURE

DATED: JANUARY 27, 2023

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** Increases minimum monthly benefit under State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program from \$50 to \$95 and authorizes DHS to increase program benefit amount.
- Type of Impact:** Annual State cost increase.
- Agencies Affected:** Department of Human Services.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	Annual
State Cost Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that State costs would increase annually by an indeterminate amount to raise the minimum monthly benefit under the State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Minimum Benefit Program by \$45 per month, from \$50 to \$95.
- Because data on the distribution, by dollar amount, of federal SNAP benefits among the State's SNAP households are not publicly available, the OLS cannot determine the magnitude of the annual cost increase.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill increases the minimum monthly benefit under the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program from \$50 to \$95 and authorizes the Department of Human Services to increase the program's benefit amount further if it deems appropriate. The bill also states that if federal funds become available for the purposes of the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program, the department is required to utilize such federal funds as the primary source for issuing the monthly benefit before any State funds are expended.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS estimates that State costs would increase annually by an indeterminate amount to raise the minimum monthly benefit under the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program from an amount equal to the difference between an eligible household's federal SNAP benefit and \$50, to an amount equal to the difference between an eligible household's federal SNAP benefit and \$95.

Because data on the distribution, by dollar amount, of federal SNAP benefits among the State's SNAP households are not publicly available, the OLS cannot determine the magnitude of the annual cost increase. It is important to note that SNAP is a federal entitlement program, meaning that any individual who qualifies for SNAP is entitled to receive SNAP benefits.

According to monthly NJ SNAP enrollment data, reported in the November 2022 *Current Program Statistics* report issued by the Department of Human Services, 397,363 households, composed of 768,584 individuals, received SNAP benefits in that month. In federal fiscal year 2023, the minimum federal SNAP benefit is \$23 per month. For context, data published by the federal government shows that in FY 2019, prior to any supplemental COVID-19 benefits initiated under the program, the average monthly benefit per SNAP-enrolled household in New Jersey was \$224. If ten percent of households receiving SNAP benefits in the State receive the minimum federal SNAP benefit of \$23 per month, and all other SNAP households receive SNAP benefits over the \$95 monthly minimum set under the bill, the bill would increase annual State expenditures by \$21.5 million to bring these households' monthly SNAP benefits up to the \$95, an increase of \$45 per month from the existing State minimum monthly supplemental SNAP benefit of \$50.

This estimate does not assume any additional increase in the State minimum monthly supplement SNAP benefit beyond the \$95 minimum; however, the OLS notes that the bill authorizes the Department of Human Services to increase the program's benefit amount if it deems such an increase appropriate. To the extent additional increases are made, State costs will increase. Moreover, this estimate further assumes that the cost of the increase will be the full responsibility of the State; however, the bill requires the department to utilize federal funds for these purposes if such funds become available.

Section: Human Services
Analyst: Sarah Schmidt
Lead Fiscal Analyst
Approved: Thomas Koenig
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).

SENATE, No. 3491

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 19, 2023

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

Senator NILSA I. CRUZ-PEREZ

District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Turner, Diegnan, Singleton, Gill, Gopal, Greenstein and Pou

SYNOPSIS

Increases minimum monthly benefit under State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program from \$50 to \$95 and authorizes DHS to increase program benefit amount.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/2/2023)

1 AN ACT concerning the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program and
2 amending P.L.2022, c.32.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6

7 1. Section 1 of P.L.2022, c.32 (C.44:10-111) is amended to read
8 as follows:

9 1. a. There is established in the Division of Family Development
10 in the Department of Human Services the State SNAP Minimum
11 Benefit Program. Under the program, the division shall distribute to
12 each eligible household a monthly State SNAP benefit equal to the
13 difference between the household's federal SNAP monthly benefit
14 and **[\$50]** \$95, which amount may be increased by the
15 Commissioner of Human Services, as deemed appropriate and
16 subject to available State appropriations. If federal funds become
17 available for the purposes of this subsection, the Commissioner of
18 Human Services shall utilize such federal funds as the primary source
19 for issuing the monthly State SNAP benefit before State funds, if
20 necessary, are expended. The State SNAP benefit shall be provided
21 to an eligible household in addition to the federal SNAP benefit.

22 b. The program shall be subject to the same State rules and
23 procedures for implementing the federal SNAP to the greatest extent
24 possible, including, but not limited to, distributing the State SNAP
25 benefit using the program's Electronic Benefit Transfer system and
26 requiring that benefits be used solely for the purchase of food as
27 defined in 7 U.S.C. s.2012.

28 c. The Commissioner of Human Services shall apply to the Food
29 and Nutrition Service within the United States Department of
30 Agriculture for any necessary waivers or approvals to implement the
31 provisions of this section.

32 d. As used in this section:

33 "Eligible household" means a household that is certified to receive
34 a federal SNAP benefit of at least one dollar per month, but less than
35 **[\$50]** \$95 per month, or a larger amount as deemed appropriated by
36 the Commissioner of Human Services, subject to available State and
37 federal funds.

38 "SNAP" means the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance
39 Program, established pursuant to the federal "Food and Nutrition Act
40 of 2008," Pub.L.110-246 (7 U.S.C. s.2011 et seq.).
41 (cf: P.L.2022, c.32, s.1)

42

43 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21

STATEMENT

This bill increases the minimum monthly benefit under the State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Minimum Benefit Program from \$50 to \$95 and authorizes the Commissioner of Human Services to increase the program's benefit amount. SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, is a nutrition assistance program that serves as a safety net for low-income households.

Base SNAP benefits are provided by the federal government. However, currently under the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program, State funds are used to ensure each SNAP household receives a minimum monthly SNAP benefit of \$50. This bill amends the governing law of this program to provide that the minimum monthly SNAP benefit is \$95. Moreover, the bill authorizes the Commissioner of Human Services to increase the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program benefit amount, subject to available State appropriations. The bill also clarifies that if federal funds become available for the purposes of the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program, the Commissioner of Human Services is required to utilize such federal funds as the primary source for issuing the monthly benefit before State funds, if necessary, are expended.

SENATE ECONOMIC GROWTH COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 3491

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 26, 2023

The Senate Economic Growth Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 3491.

As reported, this bill increases the minimum monthly benefit under the State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Minimum Benefit Program from \$50 to \$95 and authorizes the Commissioner of Human Services to increase the program's benefit amount. The bill also clarifies that if federal funds become available for the purposes of the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program, the Commissioner of Human Services is required to utilize such federal funds as the primary source for issuing the monthly benefit before State funds, if necessary, are expended.

Formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, SNAP is a nutrition assistance program that serves as a safety net for low-income households. Base SNAP benefits are provided by the federal government. However, under the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program, State funds are currently used to ensure that each SNAP household receives a minimum monthly SNAP benefit of \$50. This bill amends the law governing this program to increase the minimum monthly SNAP benefit to \$95, which amount may be increased by the Commissioner of Human Services, as deemed appropriate and subject to available State appropriations.

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE
SENATE, No. 3491
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
220th LEGISLATURE

DATED: FEBRUARY 3, 2023

SUMMARY

Synopsis: Increases minimum monthly benefit under State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program from \$50 to \$95 and authorizes DHS to increase program benefit amount.

Type of Impact: Annual State cost increase.

Agencies Affected: Department of Human Services.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	Annual
State Cost Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that State costs would increase annually by an indeterminate amount to raise the minimum monthly benefit under the State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Minimum Benefit Program by \$45 per month, from \$50 to \$95.
- Because data on the distribution, by dollar amount, of federal SNAP benefits among the State's SNAP households are not publicly available, the OLS cannot determine the magnitude of the annual cost increase.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill increases the minimum monthly benefit under the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program from \$50 to \$95 and authorizes the Department of Human Services to increase the program's benefit amount further if it deems appropriate. The bill also states that if federal funds become available for the purposes of the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program, the department is required to utilize such federal funds as the primary source for issuing the monthly benefit before any State funds are expended.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS estimates that State costs would increase annually by an indeterminate amount to raise the minimum monthly benefit under the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program from an amount equal to the difference between an eligible household's federal SNAP benefit and \$50, to an amount equal to the difference between an eligible household's federal SNAP benefit and \$95.

Because data on the distribution, by dollar amount, of federal SNAP benefits among the State's SNAP households are not publicly available, the OLS cannot determine the magnitude of the annual cost increase. It is important to note that SNAP is a federal entitlement program, meaning that any individual who qualifies for SNAP is entitled to receive SNAP benefits.

According to monthly NJ SNAP enrollment data, reported in the November 2022 *Current Program Statistics* report issued by the Department of Human Services, 397,363 households, composed of 768,584 individuals, received SNAP benefits in that month. In federal fiscal year 2023, the minimum federal SNAP benefit is \$23 per month. For context, data published by the federal government shows that in FY 2019, prior to any supplemental COVID-19 benefits initiated under the program, the average monthly benefit per SNAP-enrolled household in New Jersey was \$224. If ten percent of households receiving SNAP benefits in the State receive the minimum federal SNAP benefit of \$23 per month, and all other SNAP households receive SNAP benefits over the \$95 monthly minimum set under the bill, the bill would increase annual State expenditures by \$21.5 million to bring these households' monthly SNAP benefits up to the \$95, an increase of \$45 per month from the existing State minimum monthly supplemental SNAP benefit of \$50.

This estimate does not assume any additional increase in the State minimum monthly supplement SNAP benefit beyond the \$95 minimum; however, the OLS notes that the bill authorizes the Department of Human Services to increase the program's benefit amount if it deems such an increase appropriate. To the extent additional increases are made, State costs will increase. Moreover, this estimate further assumes that the cost of the increase will be the full responsibility of the State; however, the bill requires the department to utilize federal funds for these purposes if such funds become available.

Section: Human Services

Analyst: Sarah Schmidt
Lead Fiscal Analyst

Approved: Thomas Koenig
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Increasing Minimum SNAP Available to New Jersey Residents

02/8/2023

This Nation-Leading Policy Will Help Combat Food Insecurity Throughout the State as Emergency Federal SNAP Allotments Come to

WOODBIDGE – With households throughout America set to receive as low as \$23 in monthly Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit government's emergency allotments come to an end next month, Governor Phil Murphy today signed a bill ([A-5086](#)) to ensure every SNAP household in New Jersey receives at least \$95 in monthly benefits going forward. This nation-leading legislation represents New Jersey's ongoing commitment to combating food insecurity throughout the state.

The federal government began providing emergency allotments to SNAP households in March 2020 to offer a temporary boost in food assistance benefits that was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. With these additional payments ending as of February 28, 2023, today's legislation will raise the minimum SNAP benefit to \$95 starting March 1. This represents a \$45 increase over the initial State minimum benefit of \$50 put into place for SNAP recipients when Governor Murphy first established the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program last year.

"As the federal government's temporary boost to SNAP benefits comes to an end, we cannot ignore the significant impact this will have on households and the state," **said Governor Murphy**. "No one should ever have to wonder where their next meal will come from. By implementing a minimum monthly SNAP benefit for all SNAP beneficiaries, New Jersey is leading the nation in ensuring families have the support they need to keep putting food on the table. While we may be the first to put these critical protections into effect, we will not be the last to put these critical protections into effect."

If a New Jersey household is approved for less than \$95 in monthly SNAP benefits, they will receive their regular federal benefit plus an additional State supplement to reach this new minimum. Although most households will still see some reduction in their benefits, implementing an increased minimum benefit will help soften the impact of the allotments coming to an end.

Sponsors of the legislation include Assembly Speaker Craig J. Coughlin and Senate Majority Leader Teresa Ruiz, as well as Senator Nilsa Cruz-Perez and Senator McKnight, Yvonne Lopez, Annette Quijano, Shanique Speight, Raj Mukherji, and Verlina Reynolds-Jackson.

"We know overwhelmingly that a better nourished and more food secure New Jersey makes for a stronger one," **said Assembly Speaker Coughlin**. "This legislation will provide food security for 46,000 SNAP households, mostly vulnerable seniors and individuals with disabilities, whose health and wellbeing relies on keeping a healthy plate."

"With SNAP benefit reductions scheduled to occur at the end of February at the Federal level, many New Jerseyans would see their monthly benefits cut next month. This is critical legislation," **said Senate Majority Leader Ruiz**. "I commend Speaker Coughlin for his work in this space and join him in the efforts to protect and expand our SNAP security programs."

The New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Office of the Food Security Advocate have been working to raise awareness about the upcoming emergency allotments and what that will mean for New Jersey families – including the State's implementation of a minimum monthly benefit. Last month, DHS launched a communication and public awareness campaign that included webinars and training to frontline staff, SNAP navigators, food access community organization staff, and materials for distribution in over 20 languages and videos in English, Spanish and American Sign Language. Materials are available for download [here](#). DHS will implement the benefit change to all SNAP households starting next week.

SNAP recipients are encouraged to check their benefit detail any time online at www.njfamiliesfirst.com, with the Connect EBT mobile app, or by calling (800) 962-2837.

The Administration will continue to work with stakeholders to spread the word and inform residents about how they can maximize their benefits, such as applying for other assistance for which they may be eligible. For more information about additional food resources, visit nj211.org/food-programs-and-community-resources or call 211. Individuals and families can apply for SNAP [online](#), in-person or by calling their local [board of social services](#), or through a [SNAP Navigator](#).

"Families are feeling the pinch every time they go grocery shopping. With food prices soaring and the federal emergency SNAP benefits ending this month, we need some relief to families and individuals that rely on this assistance to put food on the table," **said DHS Commissioner Sarah Adelman**. "The Murphy Administration, through the Legislature, has made strengthening food security a top priority. Today's bill signing further proves this commitment. Access to healthy food is a must, and we will continue to connect New Jerseyans in need to food and other important resources vital for their health and well-being."

"True food security exists when all people at all times have physical, economic, and social access to safe, healthy, nutritious food," **said Mark Dinglasan, Executive Director of the Food Security Advocate**. "As the needs of our communities continue to rise, I can confidently say that I stand here, shoulder to shoulder with these leaders of our community. Our continued work in the many ongoing, multisector efforts taking place to expand food access. While we are proud that New Jersey is leading the nation in food security, it is not the end of the work but just the beginning."

Not only will the increased minimum help struggling residents, it will also help food retailers who might otherwise see a significant decrease in business as a result of the benefits.

This change to SNAP is an important part of the State's [ongoing efforts](#) to combat food insecurity, which includes other steps such as providing additional funding to the work of New Jersey's food banks.

"I commend New Jersey's lawmakers for raising the minimum monthly SNAP benefit from \$50 to \$95. This is another step in the right direction as we work to ensure that all our neighbors have access to nutritious food," **said Carlos Rodriguez, President & CEO of the Community FoodBank of New Jersey**. "As federal emergency allotments end, this measure ensures permanently expanded household budgets for the most vulnerable on SNAP, continuing our state's effort as a nationwide leader in food security."

"We applaud Governor Murphy, Assembly Speaker Coughlin and Senate Majority Leader Ruiz for their leadership and commitment to ensuring food security for all New Jerseyans," **said Ev Liebman, AARP NJ Director of Advocacy**. "Many seniors live on fixed incomes and struggle to afford food, especially when faced with rising costs."

legislation, which increases the minimum SNAP benefit, will serve to reduce food insecurity for thousands of New Jersey residents and continues the state's ensure no one is hungry."

"New Jersey is taking extraordinary steps to prevent the SNAP program from falling over the benefits cliff that this country is facing on March 1," **said Linda of NJ Food Council**. "Governor Murphy, Speaker Coughlin and Senate President Scutari serve as trailblazers in advocating and assisting our vulnerable people serves as a national role model in tackling food insecurity challenges and making sure our residents have a nutritious meal on the table especially during the inflation."

"We applaud the passage of A-5086 and Governor Murphy's efforts to ensure that New Jersey's families have access to essential nutrition assistance," **said Director, Court Appointed Special Advocates of New Jersey, Inc.** "So many of the youth and families served by Court Appointed Special Advocates struggle and, therefore, rely on SNAP benefits. This legislation will help to ensure critical, continued access to the current level of SNAP benefits, which families have

"Good policy comes to us in many forms, sometimes through careful deliberation and other times through necessary experimentation," **said Woodbridge Mayor** have seen that the expansion of SNAP benefits brought about by the tragedy of the pandemic works for our residents and ensures that fewer New Jerseyans Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin, Governor Phil Murphy and the New Jersey State Legislature for continuing to take the issue of hunger seriously and make continues to serve our residents for years to come."