

Feeding America Analysis of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024

Bill Summary – Updated March 7, 2024

On March 3, 2024, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees jointly released a bipartisan, six-bill fiscal year 2024 (FY24) appropriations package. Work on the remaining six appropriations bills has not been completed. This six-bill agreement comes after Congress passed four separate continuing resolutions, from September 2023 to March 2024, that temporarily extended government funding at FY23 levels.

This package includes the following funding bills:

- Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies; *
- Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies;
- Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies;
- Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies;
- Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies; and
- Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies.

** This appropriations bill includes funding for major Feeding America nutrition program policy priorities.*

This summary breaks down the elements of the bill most relevant to people experiencing food insecurity and the Feeding America network. Below are links to several additional helpful resources:

- [Bill text](#)
- [Bill summary](#) prepared by the House Appropriations Committee Republicans
- [Bill summary](#) prepared by the House Appropriations Committee Democrats
- [Explanatory Statement](#) provided by the Agriculture Appropriations Committees
- [Feeding America Side-by-Side Comparison of House, Senate and Final FY24 Agriculture Appropriations Bills](#)

Appropriations Process Basics

Each year, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, through their 12 subcommittees each, hold hearings to examine the budget requests and spending needs of federal programs. These committees then produce appropriations bills to fund the federal government, subject to the normal legislative process including requiring a presidential signature. Funding levels for federal nutrition programs and agriculture programs are determined by the agriculture appropriations subcommittees.

Types of Funding

Appropriations are broken down into mandatory and discretionary funding.

- Mandatory programs are authorized by Congress, and their funding is mandated by law.
- Discretionary programs are also authorized, but their funding is not guaranteed. Congress can make annual changes to the amount of funding these programs receive through the appropriations process.

Funding Analysis and Overview

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 funds the covered federal agencies at levels consistent with the bipartisan budget agreement and reaffirmed in the top-line agreement struck by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Speaker Mike Johnson in January 2024.

Mandatory programs are funded across the board at their legally required levels. Most discretionary programs are funded at levels consistent with FY23, with a notable and substantial funding increase for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) due to increased program participation. Discretionary programs that received cuts include TEFAP administrative funding and some child nutrition programs.

Nutrition Funding Provisions

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Mandatory SNAP Funding

The bill provides about \$122.4 billion in mandatory funding for SNAP, which served more than 42 million people in 2023. This fully funds the program at mandatory levels.

Specifically, the bill includes:

- \$108.3 billion for SNAP benefits;
- \$3 billion for the SNAP contingency reserve; and
- \$5.9 billion for state administrative costs.

SNAP Choice Restrictions Pilot (Not Included)

The bill does not include harmful SNAP proposals, such as new restrictions on eligibility or the dignity of choice in using SNAP benefits. The bill language encourages USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to work with Medicaid practitioners through the SNAP-Ed program to provide nutrition education to patients, reiterating the importance of a healthy diet to prevent negative health outcomes. This recommendation is in lieu of the creation of pilot projects to restrict the types of food people can buy with SNAP benefits.

Hawaii and the Thrifty Food Plan

The Senate and House Appropriations Committees shared concern that USDA's Thrifty Food Plan adjustment for Hawaii omits the price of food in rural and remote regions of the state. The bill language encourages USDA to review the adjustment and include the price of food throughout the state of Hawaii.

SNAP-Ed and Employment and Training Programs

The bill provides \$524 million for the Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Grant also known as SNAP-Ed programs. This is an increase of \$18 million over FY23 enacted funding.

The bill also provides \$663.4 million for SNAP Employment and Training Programs. This is an increase of \$13.6 million over FY23 enacted funding.

Nutrition Assistance Program for Puerto Rico (NAP)

The bill provides \$2.9 billion for the Nutrition Assistance Program for Puerto Rico (NAP). This is an increase of \$100 million over FY23 enacted funding.

Child Nutrition Programs

Mandatory Child Nutrition Program Funding

The bill appropriates \$33.3 billion for child nutrition programs. This is a \$4.8 billion increase from FY23 enacted levels.

The bill includes \$16.6 billion for the National School Lunch Program, \$6.1 billion for the School Breakfast Program and \$859.3 million for the Summer Food Service Program, funding the programs at mandatory levels.

Additionally, the bill includes:

- \$4.2 billion for the Child and Adult Care Food Program;
- \$2.5 billion for Summer EBT benefits and administration;
- \$6.7 million for the Special Milk Program; and
- \$5 million for the Farm to School program (\$9 million less than the FY23 enacted level).

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

WIC is funded through discretionary funding. The bill funds WIC at the administration's requested level of \$7 billion, an increase of more than \$1 billion from the FY23 enacted level. This increase was requested by the administration and advocates to meet the growing caseload of the program.

The bill also increases funding for fruits and vegetables in the WIC food package to meet the president's request.

Additional Discretionary Child Nutrition Program Funding

The bill also appropriates:

- \$10 million for school meal equipment grants (\$20 million less than the FY23 enacted level); and
- \$18 million for Team Nutrition.

Commodity Assistance Programs

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

The bill appropriates \$463.8 million, the full amount authorized by the farm bill, for mandatory TEFAP food purchases.

Additionally, the bill maintains language permitting state agencies, in consultation with emergency feeding organizations, to use up to 20% of the funds provided for purchasing TEFAP commodities to help with the costs of storing, transporting and distributing those foods.

The bill appropriates \$80 million in discretionary funding for TEFAP administration, also known as storage and distribution funds. This is a \$12 million decrease from the FY23 enacted level.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

The bill appropriates \$480.1 million for the Commodity Assistance Program, including \$389 million for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program. This is \$50.4 million more than the FY23 enacted level to address higher food prices and program participation.

The Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

The bill appropriates \$165 million for the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations. This is \$2.9 million more than the FY23 enacted level.

Farmers Market Nutrition Program

The bill appropriates \$10 million for the Farmers Market Nutrition Program. This is \$16 million less than the FY23 enacted level.

Additional Provisions

Community Project Funding (aka Earmarks)

The bill includes \$28 million in community project funding for 25 projects that will impact 24 Feeding America network members. We are still waiting for the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill to be released to confirm additional earmark requests.

Rescissions and Limitations on Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) Funds (Not Included)

The bill does not include rescissions related to nutrition programs or limitations to the discretionary authority of USDA to use Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) funds for food purchases distributed through TEFAP and other programs.