

November 3, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Leader Jeffries, Leader Thune, and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the 17 undersigned organizations, we urge congressional leaders to work quickly and collaboratively to resolve the current funding impasse and prevent further interruptions in vital programs that protect the health and well-being of families, children, and older adults. We are alarmed by the ongoing government shutdown and its impact on access to nutrition and health services for millions of Americans.

Collectively, our organizations and members – including registered dietitian nutritionist (RDNs), nutrition and dietetics technicians, registered (NDTRs), nutrition educators, nutrition researchers and scientists, public health providers, health care providers, and chefs – across the nation see firsthand how federal nutrition programs and services promote wellness, prevent disease, improve access, and support economic stability in communities large and small. Disruptions to these programs and services, whether through lapses in funding or expiring authorities are having immediate devastating real-world consequences.

Preserve Access to Telehealth Nutrition Services

During and after the COVID-19 pandemic, expanded telehealth flexibilities have transformed access to care. Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) have used telehealth to reach patients who would otherwise face barriers due to geography, mobility, or transportation, ensuring continuity of care for chronic disease management, preventive counseling, and post-acute care transitions.

These services have proven particularly effective in rural areas, for older adults, and for individuals living with diabetes, kidney disease, and obesity. Telehealth has reduced missed appointments,

improved adherence to treatment plans, and increased patient satisfaction – all while lowering total costs to Medicare and other payers.

Unfortunately, the lapse of these authorities has been significantly disruptive to patients and dietitians across the country. Each day that these authorities remain inactive, more individuals lose access to the preventive and therapeutic care they need. We urge Congress to act immediately to restore telehealth coverage and prevent further interruption of care. This will ensure that older adults, people with chronic conditions, rural residents, and other patients can continue receiving essential nutrition services without delay or added cost.

Protect WIC and SNAP from Disruption

We are also deeply concerned about the consequences of the shutdown for families relying on nutrition assistance programs such as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). These programs are cornerstones of public health, ensuring access to healthy foods during pregnancy, early childhood, and times of economic hardship.

The current lapse in funding and delay in benefit distribution threatens the health and stability of millions of the most vulnerable among us including women and children, older adults, and those with disabilities—many of whom already face food insecurity. Earlier this year, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued a report highlighting that nearly 70% of benefits are received by children (39%), older adults (20%), and individuals living with disabilities (10%) and the majority of household participating in SNAP are living with incomes at or above the federal poverty line.

Beyond the health implications, WIC and SNAP provide measurable economic benefit: according to USDA's Economic Research Service every federal dollar spent on these programs generates \$1.54 in economic activity from local spending and supports small businesses such as grocers and farmers' markets.

We urge Congress to act swiftly to end the shutdown to ensure these programs are fully funded and access immediately restored. Americans should not face the impossible choice between putting food on the table and paying other essential expenses because of budget gridlock.

Nutrition and health have historically been non-partisan issues because they impact everyone. Our organizations stand ready to work with Congress and the Administration to ensure access to life-sustaining care and to strengthen the nation's nutrition safety net. Ensuring that telehealth coverage remains in place and that WIC and SNAP continue to serve communities will help regain public trust and safeguard health outcomes nationwide.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Advocates for Better Children's Diets
Alliance of Wound Care Stakeholders
American Diabetes Association

American Heart Association
American Society for Nutrition
Association of SNAP Nutrition Education Administrators
Association of State Public Health Nutritionists
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Interfaith Public Health Network
National Hispanic Health Foundation
National Kidney Foundation
National WIC Association
Obesity Action Coalition
Obesity Care Advocacy Network
Teaching Kitchen Collaborative
The Obesity Society