



# National CSFP Association

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## FEDERAL CUTS IN FOOD ASSISTANCE PUT NEARLY 500,000 SENIORS, OTHERS AT RISK

*President's 2008 Budget Once Again Proposes Elimination of \$108 Million  
Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** -- Nearly half a million needy Americans, mostly low-income and homebound senior citizens, would lose access to life-sustaining meal deliveries and nutrition services under President George W. Bush's renewed push to eliminate a \$108 million food assistance program serving two-thirds of the country.

"Food insecurity among seniors contributes to malnutrition, which exacerbates disease, increases disability, decreases resistance to infection and extends hospital stays," said Frank Kubik, president of the National Commodity Supplemental Food Program Association. "You cannot design a quality health-care delivery system by undercutting programs designed to keep people healthy in the first place."

Kubik noted that in his State of the Union address Jan. 23, President Bush emphasized a shared priority to keep Americans healthy, stressing "government has an obligation to care for the elderly, the disabled and poor children." Yet, just two weeks later, the administration's proposed spending plan for the 2008 fiscal year, unveiled today, eliminates \$108 million for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, which helps those most at risk.

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program provides nutritionally balanced food packages each month to qualified seniors, mothers, children and infants (who are no longer qualified for the Women, Infants & Children program) in 32 states, two Indian Tribal Organizations and Washington, D.C.

The program issued more than 5.5 million food packages last year, many to homebound individuals who have no other options.

About 90 percent of 485,614 monthly recipients are elderly Americans who are at nutritional risk due to low income and poor diet.

Compromised food choices lead to poor nutrition, and especially affect the health of many seniors. Malnutrition increases care-giving demands and inflates national health-care expenditures associated with premature or extended hospital or nursing home stays.

In a recent CSFP survey, over 50 percent of respondents said they ran out of food during the month. More than half of seniors living alone reported an income of less than \$750 per month. Of those respondents from two-person households, more than half reported an income of less than \$1,000 per month. Program guidelines to qualify for CSFP assistance are \$1,037 for one person and \$1,390 for two people. The income guidelines will increase April 1 to \$1,106 and \$1,483, respectively.

The CSFP purchases foods at wholesale prices. The average food package costs \$15.04, and the retail value is approximately \$50.

“It doesn’t make sense to target a program that costs little and helps so many by providing preventative care in the form of healthy, balanced meals,” Kubik said. “The onus for caring for these at-risk residents won’t go away; it will simply shift to states and charitable food organizations that already are strained to do too much with too little.”

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered by state offices; local nonprofit agencies, counties and hospitals; and thousands of volunteers across the country.

This is the second consecutive year President Bush has proposed eliminating the program, even though Congress worked in a bipartisan manner last year to oppose elimination of the program and restore funding. No final federal budget was ever enacted for the 2007 fiscal year. Instead, Congress passed a continuing resolution to fund programs at 2006 levels.

CSFP currently is receiving funding for its program under this continuing resolution, which expires Feb. 15.

Started in 1969, CSFP was the nation’s first food assistance effort with monthly food packages designed to provide protein, calcium, iron, and vitamins A and C. The National Commodity Supplemental Food Program Association (NCSFPA) formed in 1996 to ensure adequate funding to help finance the distribution of nutritious foods and quality education services to seniors, moms, children and infants.

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**ATTENTION EDITORS:** Attached is a list of the number of Americans in the 32 states, two Indian Tribal Organizations and Washington, D.C., who would lose access to food assistance if the \$108 million Commodity Supplemental Food Program is eliminated, as proposed by President Bush in his 2008 fiscal year budget.

## **ATTACHMENT**

Nearly half a million Americans in the 32 states, two Indian Tribal Organizations and Washington, D.C., would lose access to food assistance if the \$108 million Commodity Supplemental Food Program is eliminated, as proposed by President Bush in his 2008 fiscal year budget, which was unveiled today. A detailed account, by state, follows:

- **Alaska --- 2,277**
- **Arizona --- 16,625**
- **California --- 53,827**
- **Colorado --- 18,844**
- **Iowa --- 3,781**
- **Illinois --- 14,463**
- **Indiana --- 4,358**
- **Kansas --- 5,763**
- **Kentucky --- 15,652**
- **Louisiana --- 66,206**
- **Michigan --- 78,430**
- **Minnesota --- 14,071**
- **Missouri --- 9,374**
- **Mississippi --- 6,996**
- **Montana --- 6,783**
- **North Carolina --- 1,249**
- **North Dakota --- 2,799**
- **Nebraska --- 13,770**
- **New Hampshire --- 7,619**
- **New Mexico --- 16,950**
- **Nevada --- 5,982**
- **New York --- 31,068**
- **Ohio --- 15,892**
- **Oregon --- 1,418**
- **Pennsylvania --- 14,600**
- **South Carolina --- 3,705**
- **South Dakota --- 2,812**
- **Tennessee --- 13,721**
- **Texas --- 15,923**
- **Vermont --- 4,005**
- **Washington --- 3,652**
- **Wisconsin --- 5,051**
  
- **District of Columbia --- 7,121**
  
- **Indian Tribal Organizations --- 827**  
Red Lake, Minnesota; and Oglala Sioux, South Dakota

**TOTAL --- 485,614**