



The Center for Accountability, Modernization, and Innovation
Washington, DC

March 17, 2022

The Honorable Don Bacon
1024 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Bacon:

The Center for Accountability, Modernization and Innovation (CAMI) strongly supports the *Emergency SNAP Staffing Flexibility Act of 2021*. We applaud the introduction of this legislation and look forward to its passage.

The *Emergency SNAP Staffing Flexibility Act of 2021* will go a long way in addressing the trouble individuals have with accessing SNAP benefits. Allowing for staffing flexibility that supplements, not supplants, full-time employees, will go a long way in addressing any surge in demand for SNAP benefits.

As you know, the pandemic made it abundantly clear that our government assistance programs were unprepared to keep up with demand. Across the nation, citizens applying for unemployment benefits were frequently met with long wait times for a representative who could answer questions and, most importantly, solve problems. Had this bill been enacted into law prior to the pandemic, we could have likely avoided the wait times and delays that the most vulnerable faced in the middle of a global pandemic.

Even now, state governments are struggling to build a workforce that can handle the needs of individuals requesting assistance. States and cities continue to face backlogs of millions of claims coupled with massive staffing shortages (at the end of last year, Denver was down to just 70 caseworkers in its human services agency, which delayed access to SNAP benefits.)

The need for state flexibility in SNAP is abundantly evident, particularly when we look at how flexibility for states in the administration of their unemployment insurance (UI) programs proved highly effective by virtually any metric. The nearly three dozen states that took advantage of the flexibilities brought service wait times down dramatically and significantly improved overall program performance.

We thank you again for your leadership on this issue and stand ready to work with you and your office to get this legislation over the finish line.

Thank you,

Stan Soloway
Chairman

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