



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: D'Anelle Desire

Director of Communications

Tennessee Justice Center

ddesire@tnjustice.org

Over 100,000 Tennesseans Face Hunger due to Sharp Drop in SNAP Enrollment

Nashville, TN, June 10, 2026 – Since the federal government changed the SNAP rules in July 2025, SNAP participation in Tennessee has fallen drastically to over 100,000 people, according to the Tennessee Department of Human Services (T-DHS). The 2025 One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), or H.R. 1, made unprecedented cuts to SNAP, and in less than a year, struggling households are losing food support, leaving some to skip meals, eat less healthy, and fall deeper into poverty. These cuts are felt by neighbors in every county in Tennessee. As grocery prices, gas, and rent continue to skyrocket, crucial food support is being taken from Tennessee tables.

SNAP enrollment decreases during times of economic growth or low unemployment rates, but according to the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), unemployment rates have remained nearly unchanged since July. Therefore, the sharp decline in enrollment is due to added government red tape and costly and cruel policy changes that have removed more than 3 million Americans from the program.

“The need for our food has increased by 10%”, said Rhonda Chafin, Chief Executive Officer of the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northeast Tennessee. “SNAP is the first line of defense, food banks provide emergency food assistance when SNAP is not available, and families don’t have enough food for themselves or their families.”

Signe Anderson, the Senior Director of Nutrition Advocacy at the Tennessee Justice Center said, “Tennesseans did not suddenly stop needing help putting food on the table. What changed was the law. New barriers and paperwork requirements have made it harder for

working families, older adults, veterans, and children to access the nutrition assistance that they are qualified to receive.”

The damage H.R. 1 is doing to SNAP participation is not the only fallout that Tennessee will see from this bill. Additionally, the Tennessee state budget will take a major hit as the state is now responsible for a larger portion of SNAP administrative and benefit costs. While Tennessee’s General Assembly has allocated the needed funds for the increased administrative cost, this next fiscal year could require Tennessee to fork over more than \$260 million for SNAP benefits.

SNAP is the most effective program to fight hunger in this country. “The 100,000 Tennesseans who have lost SNAP represents a neighbor who may be skipping meals, stretching groceries further than they should, or facing impossible choices between food, rent, medicine, and transportation. At a time when the cost of living continues to rise, Elected officials should make it easier for families to keep food on the table”, adds Anderson.

###

About Tennessee Justice Center / www.tnjustice.org

For over 30 years, the Tennessee Justice Center has been standing with vulnerable Tennessee families and helping them access basic necessities of life. Since opening our doors in 1996, TJC has used lawsuits, legislation and coalition building to overcome injustice, winning \$8 billion in health care and hundreds of millions in financial and nutrition assistance for Tennesseans. Aside from lawsuits, TJC helps assist seniors and other individuals with TennCare, SNAP and other public benefit programs.