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Media Contact:

D'Anelle Desire
Director of Communications
Tennessee Justice Center
ddesire@tnjustice.org

Thirty County Mayors Join the Tennessee Justice Center in Calling for the Return of Summer EBT

Nashville, TN, Dec. 4, 2025 – Thirty (30) Tennessee county mayors have signed onto a letter urging Governor Lee and the Tennessee Department of Human Services (DHS) to reduce hunger in Tennessee by bringing back Summer EBT (S-EBT), a federal summer anti-hunger program, in 2026. S-EBT provides a modest amount of money—roughly \$120 per child—for the entire summer, for families to buy food for eligible school-aged children while school is out. This helps bridge the gap for children who receive free or reduced-price meals during the school year.

The S-EBT program served roughly 700,000 Tennessee children in 2024. Unfortunately, Governor Lee opted out of the program in 2025, stripping this support away from these children and their families. TJC, alongside community advocates and partners, have been advocating for the program's return in Summer 2026.

Signe Anderson, the Tennessee Justice Center's Senior Director of Nutrition Advocacy, said, "Tennessee's reversal on Summer EBT this past summer was a hit to families trying to afford food. Families were also hit in November when SNAP benefits were blocked from reaching food insecure households."

Mayors from 30 of the 95 counties have endorsed the S-EBT program's return for 2026, encouraging the Governor to act: *Bedford, Campbell, Cannon, Chester, Claiborne, Clay, Coffee, Crockett, Dyer, Franklin, Gibson, Hancock, Hardeman, Hawkins, Jackson, Jefferson, Lewis, Lincoln, Marion, Marshall, Maury, Moore, Morgan, Pickett, Polk, Rhea, Smith, Stewart, White, Wilson*

Mayors can still sign-onto the letter! Contact your Tennessee county mayor and encourage them to support the return of Summer EBT in 2026. Mayors who want to support families and end summer hunger can sign on here: <https://forms.office.com/r/EyNheNxjPq>

The fight to secure Summer EBT for Tennessee children in 2026 is not over. States have until December 31, 2025, to opt in. Most states, including our neighbors in Alabama, Kentucky, and Arkansas, are providing this support to their families. "Now is the time for Governor Lee and the state to bring back Summer EBT, which would put food in the homes of families who need it. Every resource should be made available to support families and the economy," added Signe.

See the map of states that participated in 2025 [here](#).

Urge Governor Lee to end summer hunger and bring back Summer EBT in 2026. TJC has resources at tnjustice.org/antihunger for individuals to advocate for S-EBT and food security in Tennessee.

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[About Tennessee Justice Center / www.tnjustice.org](https://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 \$2 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.