



April 29, 2026

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
521 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
2267 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson and Minority Leader Jeffries,

On behalf of AASA, The School Superintendents Association, representing 10,000 public school district leaders across the country, we are reaching out to share our thoughts on the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026 (H.R. 7567) ahead of the floor vote. As an organization that represents the priorities of K-12 education leaders, we have a narrow scope of interest in this bill as it pertains to the Secure Rural Schools Program, which provides foundational financial support to many rural school districts, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), a critical component of the federal nutrition programs that ensure children are nourished and ready to learn.

We greatly appreciate the reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act (SRS) through Fiscal Year (FY) 2031 that is included in H.R. 7567. SRS provides essential funding to counties and schools that are near National Forest Lands and, consequently, unable to generate property tax revenue. The program serves 741 counties across 41 states and Puerto Rico, reaching more than 4,400 school districts. SRS payments are flexible, allowing communities to direct funds toward what they need most: supporting teachers and school operations, maintaining rural roads, sustaining fire and law enforcement services, and building the forest management capacity that protects these communities from wildfire and other hazards. In the smallest and most remote schools, SRS funding is not supplemental, it is critical. If Congress does not reauthorize SRS before its expiration, the program reverts to a revenue sharing model and the reliant counties lose much of the funding they need to continue standard operations.

We appreciate Chairman Thompson's continued leadership to protect this critical source of funding by including it in this legislation and providing a five-year extension instead of the three year extension that has become the standard. This will give Congress more time between reauthorizations and more importantly, give impacted districts much needed stability for these essential federal funds.

Conversely, we are deeply concerned by the \$187 billion cut to SNAP that Congress passed as part of the *One Big Beautiful Bill Act* (OBBBA) and the impact it will have on students and schools. The farm bill represents a bipartisan opportunity to make meaningful changes to SNAP and we strongly encourage further consideration to address the most harmful SNAP provisions from OBBBA.

As the largest federal nutrition assistance program, SNAP helps roughly 22.4 million families ensure that their children arrive at school ready to learn. While the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program are important programs to ensure students get the meals they need to learn and grow, SNAP is an essential program to address childhood hunger outside of school. Last fall, superintendents were confronted with this reality when the longest government shutdown in history jeopardized the continuity of SNAP benefits for students. School districts quickly pivoted to host food pantries and direct families to other community resources, but nothing could make up for the critical support of SNAP.

In addition to direct support for students and families, schools also rely on SNAP enrollment for direct certification – which allows schools to automatically enroll eligible children in school meal programs and in some instances, allows schools to provide healthy school meals for all students through the Community Eligibility Provision. A decline in SNAP enrollment and therefore, direct certification, will result in more paperwork for schools and families and less meals for kids. In some states, lower direct certification could even impact state education funding allocations.

According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, SNAP enrollment has already decreased by 2.5 million people since the July 2025 enactment of OBBBA. As the cost shifts to states begin to take effect, states will face no good options as they either cut funding from other critical investments or make cuts to their existing SNAP program, further limiting eligibility. In the worst-case scenarios, states may pull the funding directly from their K-12 budgets or completely withdraw from SNAP, terminating the program for everyone eligible in the state.

We recognize that a full repeal of OBBBA’s SNAP provisions is unlikely, however, at a minimum, we urge Congress to amend H.R. 7567 and delay the cost shift of SNAP benefits to states until 2030. Current law allows states with a Payment Error Rate (PER) above 13.33 percent in FY 2025 or FY 2026 to delay benefit cost sharing until FY 2030. This structure negatively impacts states that have done the work to reduce their PERs and incentivize others states to maintain their high PERs in order to get the delay. Applying the cost shift start date uniformly would avoid uneven treatment and ensure incentives remain aligned with the priorities of improving programs.

We look forward to continued collaboration as Congress works to strengthen programs that are vital for every student’s success, regardless of geography or socioeconomic status.

Sincerely,

Tara Thomas

Tara Thomas
Senior Government Affairs Manager
AASA, The School Superintendents Association

CC: Members of the United States House of Representatives