

Testimony of Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation % East New York Farms!

613 New Lots Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11207

Before the New York State Assembly and New York State Senate
Joint Legislative Public Hearing on the FY 2026-FY 2027 Executive Budget
Topic: Human Services

February 5, 2026

Dear New York State Assembly and New York State Senate,

On behalf of East New York Farms, I am writing to express our strong support for a \$244 million investment in the Enacted Budget to create a food benefit for New Yorkers who are ineligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) due solely to their immigration status. Our community based nonprofit is dedicated to addressing food justice by promoting local sustainable agriculture and community led economic development in East New York, Brooklyn. We see this legislation as a crucial step in guaranteeing the human right to food for all New Yorkers and increasing access to vital food assistance to immigrant communities that already face disproportionate systemic barriers in accessing fresh, healthy food.

Currently, as many as 673,000 New Yorkers are unjustly excluded from SNAP benefits solely because of their immigration status.¹ This number accounts for New Yorkers who have been denied SNAP benefits because they have Temporary Protected Status, DACA, undocumented status, or have Green Card status but are on the 5 Year Waiting List to apply for benefits. This estimation does not account for the thousands of New Yorkers newly affected by the passing of H.R. 1, signed into law in July 2025. This new legislation increased eligibility restrictions, stripping and rolling back long standing SNAP eligibility for refugees, asylees, and humanitarian parolees.² The Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA)'s most recent estimate is that 41,000 additional New Yorkers were affected.³

Access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is essential for many households to afford groceries, but research supports that food insecurity disproportionately affects New Yorkers along lines of race. In 2022, 24% of latino New Yorkers, 23% of Black New Yorkers, and 8% of white New

¹[American Immigration Council, Immigrants in New York](#)

²[U.S.D.A., SNAP Implementation of the OBBB Act of 2025](#)

³[New York State Governor, Hochul Warns of Crippling Effects of Republicans' 'Big Ugly Bill'](#)

Yorkers reported food insecurity.⁴ Research published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine revealed that noncitizens are nearly twice as likely to be food-insecure as U.S.-born and naturalized citizens.⁵

In our work as a food justice organization in East New York Brooklyn, a predominantly Black neighborhood where many of our community members are immigrants of Caribbean, West African, Latino and South Asian backgrounds, we frame the disparities and systemic inequities in food access by using the term “food apartheid”. This term recognizes the ways that racially discriminatory policies, practices and attitudes still continue to determine the rights and access to food resources and health outcomes. In East New York, this historical context explains why access to fresh produce is so limited, as redlining, white flight and disinvestment have left few grocery stores in the neighborhood and even fewer that supply fresh and organic produce. Our farmers markets serve to address this systemic issue. This past year, residents converted \$16,142.75 of federal and state food assistance programs into fresh food through our markets. Expanding access to SNAP would have a direct impact on increasing food access and lowering barriers to fresh produce for immigrant residents of East New York, while also directly supporting local organic gardeners in the neighborhood and regional farmers.

Expanding SNAP benefits to everyone, regardless of citizenship status, is a first step to help to close the disproportionately higher rates of poverty and food insecurity experienced by immigrant households. Given the food insecurity crisis, SNAP4All New York proposes using state funds to provide a food benefit to all income-eligible households currently ineligible for SNAP solely due to their immigration status. In the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-2027 Executive Budget, this program should begin its roll out by prioritizing two groups facing urgent food needs: 1) individuals who are newly ineligible for SNAP due to immigration status exclusions under H.R.1, and 2) households with children who are currently ineligible for SNAP due to their immigration status, as recommended in December 2024 by the New York State Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council (CPRAC). A full SNAP4All policy would ultimately include more than just these two groups, providing a food benefit for all income-eligible New Yorkers. This program is laid out in S.9033 (Rivera) / A.6632 (González-Rojas).

We at East New York Farms are part of over 110 organizations — including health, food security, immigrant rights, and agriculture organizations — that have joined the SNAP4All New York Coalition, calling for a state-funded food benefit for all income-eligible households currently ineligible for SNAP.⁶ At this time, a state-wide effort in expanding SNAP access to New Yorkers who are unjustly excluded from benefits due to their immigration status is vital and necessary. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

East New York Farms! Staff

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⁴ [Feeding America, Food Insecurity among the Overall Population in New York; Child Population in New York](#)

⁵ [American Journal of Preventive Medicine, Food Insecurity Disparities Among Immigrants in the U.S.](#)

⁶ [Equity Advocates SNAP4All Members](#)