

Joint Statement by the Coalition for Food Security Puerto Rico, National Organizations and Stakeholder Groups in Support of Transitioning Puerto Rico to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Puerto Rico is home to U.S. citizens who deserve participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The 2023 Farm Bill provides the opportunity to transition Puerto Rico into SNAP and finally afford people residing in the territory parity to nutrition benefits offered in the states, Guam and USVI.

SNAP is the most critical anti-hunger program supporting nutrition, health, and economic well-being. Yet, people living in Puerto Rico were excluded from the program in 1981 and locked into a capped federal block grant known as the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP). Over the past forty years, Puerto Rico's exclusion from the program has exacerbated poverty and food insecurity for low-income families, children, the elderly, and veterans. When implemented in 1982, the transition resulted in an automatic 25% reduction in aid.

Currently, the maximum monthly benefit for people receiving NAP in Puerto Rico averages **41 percent** less than SNAP in the 48 states and D.C. With inflation, food supply chain challenges, and increasing poverty, families are facing even greater hardships.

The block grant severely limits Puerto Rico's ability to respond to necessary changes. NAP has no equivalent to Disaster-SNAP, so disasters or emergencies require new and separate appropriations by Congress, which can take months. Following Hurricane Maria in September 2017, people in Puerto Rico waited six months to receive additional nutrition aid.

Since NAP is not need-based like SNAP, U.S. citizens living in Puerto Rico receive uneven benefits as enrollment levels go up or down. Given reduced funding, NAP has stricter eligibility requirements, so people have lower income levels than those in the states. People receiving NAP make hard decisions about food, nutrition, health, and housing every day. SNAP provides essential support to workers in low-income jobs as they seek employment and financial security for their families.

Nearly one in three NAP households in Puerto Rico is a person aged 60 or older, and 56% of all households are people living alone. Families with children, older adults, children, the working poor, and persons with disabilities represent 80% of all NAP households.

The nutrition aid provided to Puerto Rico helps the U.S. economy with 75% of imported food purchased from the U.S. Puerto Rico's purchases greatly support U.S. manufacturing, distribution, farming, and transportation. Puerto Rico's executive and legislative branches of government are already committed and preparing for a SNAP transition.

The 2023 Farm Bill presents Congress with the opportunity to include Puerto Rico in SNAP through a systemic transition that provides equitable nutrition benefits to its residents. We ask you to support Puerto Rico's participation in SNAP.

April 27, 2023

Able Sales
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Acción Comunitaria del Vivi, Inc.
ACOMERPR
ACDET – Puerto Rico Retailers Association
AgriLove
AJC International, Inc.
Alabama State Association of Cooperatives
Alianza Americas
Alliance to End Hunger
American Butchers, Inc.
American Federation of Government Employees – Local 3354
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
American GI Forum
American Heart Association
American Indian Mothers, Inc.
American Sustainable Business Network
Ardent Mills
ARTE Inc.
Asociación Hecho en Puerto Rico, Inc.
Asociacion Mayaguezana de Personas con Impedimentos, Inc.
ASPIRA Association, Inc.
Asociación de Servicios Sociales Pentecostales – Puerto Rico
Avanzada (PROACE)
AVANCE
B. Fernandez & Hnos., Inc.
Ballester Hermanos, Inc.
Banco de Alimentos de Puerto Rico
Bill's Kitchen, Inc.
Bipartisan Policy Center Food & Nutrition Security Task Force
Bread for the World
Can Manufacturers Institute
Caribbean Can Manufacturing
Caribbean Logistics Solutions, LLC
Caribbean Produce
Caritas de Puerto Rico
Casa de Esperanza
Casa Otonal, Inc.
Casita Maria
Center for A New Economy
Center for Disability Rights, Inc.
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Centro Sor Isolina Ferre
Century Parking Corp./Carmela Foods
Club de Leones de Catano
Coca-Cola Puerto Rico Bottlers
Compañeros Campesinas
Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI)
Congressional Hunger Center

Conuco Campesino
Corporación COPASE
Crowley Maritime Corp.
Cuban American National Council
Cupey Renace
Dando El PAN Necesitado
Dominicanos USA
Dominico-American Society of Queens
Dynamic CDC
Eagle Logistics Systems
Farinaceos del Este
Farm Aid
Farm to Table – New Mexico
Farmworker Association of Florida
Farmworker Justice
Feeding America
Ferraiuoli LLC
Fifth Avenue Committee
Food Research & Action Center (FRAC)
Fresh House LLC
Fundacion Suenos Inolvidables
Fundacion de Desarrollo Comunal de P.R., Inc.
Fundacion Yo Puedo Inc.
GIG Logistics, LLC
GreenLatinos
Grupo Amor
GrupoFerrer
GrupoNavis
GMT LLC
Harvard Law School Food Law and Policy Clinic
Hermanos Sin Fronteras, Inc.
Hispanic Alliance of Southeastern Connecticut
Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities (HACU)
Hispanic Federation (HF)
Hispanics In Philanthropy (HIP)
Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA)
Hogar Niños Forjadores de Esperanza
Holsum de Puerto Rico
House of Representatives of Puerto Rico
Hunger Free America
I Challenge Myself
Ibero American Action League
ID Shaliah, Inc.
Iglesia Cristiana Rio del Jordan
Iglesia de Dios Oasis de Bendicion
Iglesia de Dios Buenas Nuevas
Iglesia de Dios Eclesiates, Inc.
Iglesia de Dios Morada de Justicia, Inc.
Iglesia Evangélica Centro Cristiano Shalom

Iglesia Metodista de Puerto Rico
Iglesia Metodista San Pablo
Iglesia Pentecostal Vida por Vidas
Iglesia Presbiteriana USA
Industria Lechera de Puerto Rico, Inc.
Instituto del Desarrollo de la Juventud
Interra Foods
International Public Terminal LLC
International Shipping Agency, Inc.
Inter-University Program for Latino Research (IUPLR)
Jesus' Angels
Kikuet Foods
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA)
Latino Commission on AIDS
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Latino Leadership
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
Lions Club International Puerto Rico
LiveWell Greenville
Make the Road New York
MANA, A National Latina Organization
Marine and Terminal Services, Inc.
Marine Asset Management, Inc.
Marvel International, Inc.
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
Menaco Corporation
Méndez & Co., Inc.
Mexican American Legal Defense & Educational Fund (MALDEF)
MIDA – Food Merchandising and Distribution Association
Mi Familia Vota
Ministerio Rescatadores sin Banderas
Miranda Family Fund
Mujeres Ayudando Madres, Inc. (MAM, Inc.)
Mujeres de Islas
NALEO Educational Fund
National Association of Hispanic Educators (NAHE)
National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators
National Hispanic Council on Aging
National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts (NHFA)
National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMA)
National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA)
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice
National Latinx Psychological Association (NLPA)
National Puerto Rican Chamber of Commerce
North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers Land Loss Prevention Project
Oceanic General Agency, Inc.
One Wellness Group
Orden de Santiago Apostol
Organización Solidaridad Humanitaria

Oscar Cash and Carry
Paletados Levittown
Pan Pepin, Inc.
Pesticide Action Network
PFLAG National
Pilgrims/To Ricos Ltd.
Presente.org
Profamilias
Programa de Ayuda a Personas de Edad
Programa de Educación Comunal de Entrega y Servicio (PECES, Inc.)
Pueblo, Inc.
Puerto Rican Association for Human Development, Inc. (PRAHD)
Puerto Rico Coffee Roasters
Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration
Puerto Rico Food Safety & Quality Services
Puerto Rico Manufacturers Association
Puerto Rico Shipping Association
Pure Fresh Sales, Inc.
Quesos Vaca Negra Inc.
Quirch Corporation
Red por los Derechos de la Niñez y Juventud de Puerto Rico, Inc.
Repertorial Espanol
Rosland Agricultural Supplies, Ltd.
Ruiz Law Offices
Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA (RAFI-USA)
Rural Advancement Fund of the National Sharecroppers Fund
Rural Coalition
Rural Development Leadership Network
Sea Air Systems, Inc.
San Juan Center, Inc.
Selectos, Inc.
Senate of Puerto Rico
SER – Jobs for Progress National, Inc.
Share Our Strength
SNAC International
Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project (SVREP)
Spanish Speaking Elderly Council - RAICES
Supermercados Econo, Inc.
Supermercados Máximo, Inc.
Teatro Circulo
Tenedor Social
Tierra Valiente CRL con Fin Social
UnidosUS
Union of Concerned Scientists
United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
United States Hispanic Leadership Institute (USHLI)
United States-Mexico Chamber of Commerce
United Way Puerto Rico
United We Stand For Puerto Rico, Inc

Urban Health Plan, Inc.
U.S. – Mexico Foundation
V. Suárez & Co., Inc.
Violence Intervention Program
VIP Community Services
Teatro Aragua Inc.
Tenedor Social
Tres Monjitas
ToteMaritime
Voto Latino
Walmart Puerto Rico
World Farmers
Zone 126