

The National Grocers Association (NGA) represents 21,000 independent community grocers and wholesalers across the United States. Independent community grocers account for 33 percent of all grocery sales, exceeding \$250 billion, and more than 1 million American jobs.

## What is SNAP Choice?

Individuals using Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to purchase food can choose what foods they purchase at the grocery store. This choice ensures families are allowed to shop with the same dignity as any other customer. This choice also allows grocery stores to treat SNAP recipients like other customers at the register and has helped create one of the most efficient and effective government assistance programs in existence.

## What will happen if SNAP Choice is Restricted?

There are proposals to restrict SNAP choice which are intended to promote better health and reduce program costs but restricting SNAP choice will do neither. **Restricting SNAP choice will ...**

### Increase Program Implementation Costs for the Government and Businesses

- ✦ The government will need to categorize more than 600,000 products and thousands more each year to create and maintain a food code to determine what foods can be purchased with SNAP.
- ✦ Grocery stores will have to change point of sale systems for each of the over 200,000 items in store.
- ✦ Grocery store cashiers will become the food police telling parents what they should feed their families.

### Not Create Meaningful Public Health Outcomes

- ✦ Most SNAP transactions are split tender, meaning they are partially paid for out of pocket. Foods not allowed on the program will just be moved to out-of-pocket purchases and not change an individual's purchasing habits.
- ✦ The diet of an individual on SNAP is not significantly different than the average American diet. Restrictions would punish people for needing assistance. To improve public health, nutrition incentives are more effective and can be targeted to high need communities.

### Reduce Program Flexibility which is the Key to its Success

- ✦ SNAP choice allows individuals with a variety of diseases and dietary needs to purchase the foods they need.
- ✦ SNAP choice allows the program to remain flexible during a supply chain shortage and declared emergencies. Restrictions would limit the program's ability to react to the changing needs of the community.

Transforming SNAP from an efficient government assistance program into one that requires more regulation and more bureaucracy to run – with no clear public health benefit – will harm SNAP participants, taxpayers, and businesses.

# At the HEART of the community.

