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I am writing in support of Alaska changing the drug felony requirements for the food stamp program.

Presently, if a client has been convicted of a drug felony after August 22, 1996, then in Alaska the client is permanently ineligible for food stamps.

The Congressional intent was not to enable drug addiction since addicts would sell their benefit.

Unfortunately, this continues to punish clients who have stopped the addiction and remained clean. Given that many are recently released from prison, they already have difficulty re-integrating into society and getting a job. Putting another impediment increases the likelihood that they may revert to previous behaviors and end up back in jail.

Notice that this prohibition does not apply to other felons - murderers, rapists, thieves, etc.

We should reward good behavior.

This provides a way for clients to show a change in behavior, while reimposing the ban if they are subsequently convicted again.

Thank you.