

Native Village of White Mountain
IRA Tribal Council
P.O. Box 84090
White Mountain, AK 99784
TELEPHONE: (907) 638-3651 & FAX: (907) 638-3652

October 30, 2023

Dear Representative Mina and Senator Giessel,

Thank you for introducing HB 196 and SB 149 to implement Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) within the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which allows state to eliminate the asset test and raise the gross income eligibility limits for certain households.

Option under BBCE will provide targeted assistance for low income working families and seniors. Raising the gross income limit primarily benefits working families with children, as they are more likely to have competing expenses like childcare, housing, and utilities, leaving them unable to afford the necessary foods for a healthy diet. Removing the asset tests helps households – often seniors – with modest savings or assets still qualify for the assistance they need, while reducing the administrative burden on the State. Most of the households in White Mountain don't qualify for SNAP because of the houses, boats, or other vehicles they own or being just over the income threshold.

When Alaskans needing assistance are not able to receive SNAP, they show up at food banks and pantries like the Native Village of White Mountain. This legislation comes at a time that food insecurity levels are elevated. There are families that have 6-8 individuals in the household and they need food at least twice per month and we are always in support of giving them food because they have a lot of children who are hungry. SNAP is a crucial program that helps Alaska's anti-hunger network to meet the need.

For these reasons, we support HB 196 and SB 149 to reduce hunger in Alaska, eliminate administrative burdens on the Division of Public Assistance, and save the state money.

Best Regards,

Mary D. Charles

President, Native Village of White Mountain



Nome Community Center, Inc.

**Post Office Box 98
Nome, Alaska 99762**

**Phone: 907-443-5259
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epalmero@namecc.org**

October 10, 2023

Dear Representative Mina and Senator Giessel,

Thank you for introducing HB 196 and SB 149 to implement Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) within the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which allows states to eliminate the asset test and raise the gross income eligibility limits for certain households.

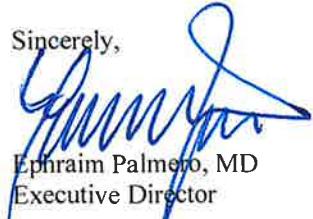
Options under BBCE will provide targeted assistance for low income working families and seniors. Raising the gross income limit primarily benefits working families with children, as they are more likely to have competing expenses like childcare, housing, and utilities, leaving them unable to afford the necessary foods for a healthy diet. Removing the asset test helps households – often seniors – with modest savings or assets still qualify for the assistance they need, while reducing the administrative burden on the State. Several of our Food Bank clients have fishing cabins and fishing boats and gear that was weather damaged hence they were ineligible upon asset test determination.

When Alaskans needing assistance are not able to receive SNAP, they show up at food banks and pantries like Nome Food Bank. This legislation comes at a time that food insecurity levels are already elevated. The current surging numbers in our Food Bank operation has increased from less than 1,000 to 1,335 households! SNAP is a crucial program that helps Alaska's anti-hunger network to meet the need.

For these reasons, we support HB196 and SB149 to reduce hunger in Alaska, eliminate administrative burdens on the Division of Public Assistance, and save the state money.

Best,

Sincerely,


Ephraim Palmero, MD
Executive Director

Service to the People of the Bering Strait Region since 1910

Dear Representative Mina and Senator Giessel,

Thank you for introducing HB 196 and SB 149 to implement Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) within the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which allows states to eliminate the asset test and raise the gross income eligibility limits for certain households.

Yesterday (10/25/2023) the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Economic Research Service released its report: **Household Food Security in the United States in 2022**. The 2022 data is sobering, showing that 1 in 7 people, including 1 in 5 children, in the U.S. live in food insecure households. This is an increase of more than 30% and 40% respectively from the previous year, the highest rate and number since 2014 and the largest one-year increase since 2008.

Options under BBCE will provide targeted assistance for low income working families and seniors. Raising the gross income limit primarily benefits working families with children, as they are more likely to have competing expenses like childcare, housing, and utilities, leaving them unable to afford the necessary foods for a healthy diet. Removing the asset test helps households – often seniors – with modest savings or assets still qualify for the assistance they need, while reducing the administrative burden on the State.

When Alaskans needing assistance are not able to receive SNAP, they show up at food banks and pantries like Southeast Alaska Food Bank. This legislation comes at a time that food insecurity levels are already elevated.

USDA's Household Food Security Report for 2022 Shows Individuals Experiencing Food - The number of people living in food insecure households in the United States in 2022 increased to 44 million, including 13 million children, according to a report released today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). This is an increase of 31% for all individuals and 44% for children from the previous year, the highest rate and number of individuals and children since 2014 and the largest one-year increase in food insecurity since 2008.

The Southeast Alaska Food Bank distributed a record breaking, 581,500# of food this past Fiscal year. The most in our 27 year history! We are on pace to exceed that mark this year.

SNAP is a crucial program that helps Alaska's anti-hunger network to meet the need.

For these reasons, we support HB196 and SB149 to reduce hunger in Alaska, eliminate administrative burdens on the Division of Public Assistance, and save the state money.

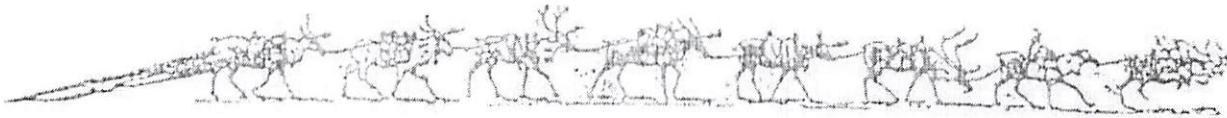
Best,

Chris Schapp – Executive Director

Southeast Alaska Food Bank – Juneau, Alaska

STEBBINS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 71002 Stebbins, AK 99671
Phone: 907-934-2393/2653 Fax: 907-934-3560
Email: tc.wbb@kawerak.org



10/10/2023

Dear Representative Mina and Senator Giessel,

Thank you for introducing HB 196 and SB 149 to implement Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) within the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which allows states to eliminate the asset test and raise the gross income eligibility limits for certain households.

Options under BBCE will provide targeted assistance for low income working families and seniors. Raising the gross income limit primarily benefits working families with children, as they are more likely to have competing expenses like childcare, housing, and utilities, leaving them unable to afford the necessary foods for a healthy diet. Removing the asset test helps households – often seniors – with modest savings or assets still qualify for the assistance they need, while reducing the administrative burden on the State. Some families have a hard time waiting for SNAP to be approved due to the income threshold plus the screening and interview time. They still struggle towards the middle and end of the month to support a large family.

When Alaskans needing assistance are not able to receive SNAP, they show up at food banks and pantries like Stebbins Community Association. This legislation comes at a time that food insecurity levels are already elevated. Stebbins is a small rural village, and like most rural villages it has a limited number of job opportunities that residents can apply for and work. Also, the cost of freight that is flown in increases the cost of food that is sold at the local stores, making it harder to afford to support families in times of need. SNAP is a crucial program that helps Alaska's anti-hunger network to meet the need.

For these reasons, we support HB196 and SB149 to reduce hunger in Alaska, eliminate administrative burdens on the Division of Public Assistance, and save the state money.

Best,

Lydia Raymond-Snowball



Stebbins Community Association

Native Village of Unalakleet



October 10, 2023

Dear Representative Mina and Senator Giessel:

Thank you for introducing HB 196 and SB 149 to implement Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCS) within the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which allows states to eliminate the asset test and raise the gross income eligibility limits for certain households.

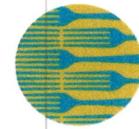
Option under BBCS will provide targeted assistance for low income working families and seniors. Raising the gross income limit primarily benefits working families with children, as they are more likely to have competing expenses like childcare, housing, and utilities, leaving them unable to afford the necessary foods for a healthy diet. Removing the asset test helps household – often seniors- with modest savings or assets still qualify for the assistance they need, while reducing the administrative burden on the State. Clients with boats that are needed for transportation and food gathering are necessary in Alaska due to our state being mainly a coastal state. The return of salmon has been scarce and also the ADF&G closing salmon fishing across our western area has made our resident seek assistance from SNAP and foodbanks, if they are available. I have not seen our people as food insecure as they have been for the past two years. Many of our community members are just barely over the income threshold and have been denied access to food.

When Alaskans needing assistance are not able to receive SNAP, they show up at food banks and pantries like the NVU Food bank. This legislation comes at a time that food insecurity levels are already elevated as explained in the above paragraph. The Native Village of Unalakleet is running a small program and now we have had to increase our services to a larger food bank system in order to keep up with the need. SNAP is a crucial program that helps Alaska's anti-hunger network to meet the need.

For these reasons, we support HP 196 and SP 149 to reduce hunger in Alaska for our elders and children and to eliminate administrative burdens on the Division of Public Assistance and save the State of Alaska money.

Sincerely,

Frank Katchatag
President



Upper Susitna
FOOD PANTRY

16004 Walsted Road

PO Box 277

Talkeetna, Alaska 99676

uppersusitnafoodpantry@gmail.com

907-733-3358

uppersusitnafoodpantry.org

11/08/2023

Dear Representative Mina and Senator Giessel,

Thank you for introducing HB 196 and SB 149 to implement Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) within the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which allows states to eliminate the asset test and raise the gross income eligibility limits for certain households.

Options under the BBCE program offer targeted assistance to low-income working families and seniors. By raising the gross income limit, the program primarily benefits working families with children, who often have multiple expenses such as childcare, housing, and utilities, making it challenging to afford a healthy diet. Removing the asset test helps households, particularly seniors, who have modest savings or assets still qualify for the assistance they need, while also reducing the administrative burden on the state.

The proposed legislation is being introduced at a time when food insecurity levels are already high and increasing every day. When Alaskans who require assistance are unable to receive SNAP benefits, they often turn to food banks and pantries such as the Upper Susitna Food Pantry. As a pantry, we have limited resources and the increasing demand is forcing us to make difficult choices regarding the frequency and amount of food we distribute to families each month. The Upper Susitna Food Pantry is the only available resource in the area we serve, and these tough decisions not only impact the families in need but also affect the well-being of our entire community. **Snap is a crucial program that helps Alaska's anti-hunger network to eliminate hunger and food insecurity throughout the state** and any measures that can be taken to improve access and remove barriers will improve the well-being of families and our state as a whole.

We support using HB196 and SB149 to reduce hunger in Alaska, eliminate administrative burdens on the Division of Public Assistance, and save the state money.

Thank you,

LouAnne Carroll-Tysdal
Executive Director
Upper Susitna Food Pantry
907-733-3358



33955 Community College Drive, Soldotna, AK 99669 • PHONE: 907-262-3111 • FAX: 907-416-7623

Dear Representative Mina and Senator Giessel,

Thank you for introducing HB 196 and SB 149 to implement Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) within the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which allows states to eliminate the asset test and raise the gross income eligibility limits for certain households.

Options under BBCE will provide targeted assistance for low income working families and seniors. Raising the gross income limit primarily benefits working families with children, as they are more likely to have competing expenses like childcare, housing, and utilities, leaving them unable to afford the necessary foods for a healthy diet. Removing the asset test helps households – often seniors – with modest savings or assets still qualify for the assistance they need, while reducing the administrative burden on the State.

We recently had a client, a family of 4, both parents are working, and they are saving to move out of a shelter. A family gave them an older car so they could both get to work on time and the gift of the car put them over allowable assets. How can they get ahead and live independently when they cannot have reliable transportation to their jobs? We had another client lose benefits because their income went over by \$200.00.

When Alaskans needing assistance are not able to receive SNAP, they show up at food banks and pantries like Kenai Peninsula Food Bank. This legislation comes at a time that food insecurity levels are already elevated. With high inflation and dramatic decrease in TEFAP Food availability, our ability to provide needed nutrition is more and more limited. SNAP is a crucial program that helps Alaska's anti-hunger network to meet the need.

For these reasons, we support HB196 and SB149 to reduce hunger in Alaska, eliminate administrative burdens on the Division of Public Assistance, and save the state money.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Meyer".

Greg Meyer, Executive Director

Kenai Peninsula Food Bank

Dear Representative Mina and Senator Giessel,

Thank you for introducing HB 196 and SB 149 to implement Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) within the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which allows states to eliminate the asset test and raise the gross income eligibility limits for certain households.

Options under BBCE will provide targeted assistance for low income working families and seniors. Raising the gross income limit primarily benefits working families with children, as they are more likely to have competing expenses like childcare, housing, and utilities, leaving them unable to afford the necessary foods for a healthy diet. Removing the asset test helps households – often seniors – with modest savings or assets still qualify for the assistance they need, while reducing the administrative burden on the State.

When Alaskans needing assistance are not able to receive SNAP, they show up at food banks and pantries like **The Chugiak Eagle River Food Pantry**. This legislation comes at a time that food insecurity levels are already elevated. We are hearing many stories of very slow processing of SNAP applications and that has helped to drive our numbers up. We are currently seeing 140-150 family's month. Our Saturday distribution is also seeing about 10% increase, to 250 folks per month. There is no question the lack of SNAP is increasing food insecurities and requiring more food to be distributed through our Food Pantry operations to satisfy hunger needs. SNAP is a crucial program that helps Alaska's anti-hunger network to meet the need.

For these reasons, we support HB196 and SB149 to reduce hunger in Alaska, eliminate administrative burdens on the Division of Public Assistance, and save the state money.

Best,

Lynn Kile

Volunteer Director

Chugiak Eagle River Food Pantry