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(Original Signature of Member)

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to repeal the particular work requirement that disqualifies able-bodied adults for eligibility to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. LEE of California introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to repeal the particular work requirement that disqualifies able-bodied adults for eligibility to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Improving Access to
5 Nutrition Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) 35 million people, including over 10 million
2 children, suffered from hunger even before the
3 COVID-19 pandemic.

4 (2) Analyses show that 50 million people, in-
5 cluding 17 million children, could go hungry due to
6 the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

7 (3) As of December 2020, food insecurity
8 among White households with children was 24.2 per-
9 cent, while 38.6 percent of Latinx and 40.6 percent
10 of African-American households with children suf-
11 fered from food insecurity.

12 (4) Black and Hispanic children were twice as
13 likely to live in households without enough to eat as
14 white children, entering this crisis at dispropor-
15 tionate risk of going hungry.

16 (5) Adults who identify as American Indian,
17 Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, or
18 as multiracial, were twice as likely as white adults
19 to report that their household did not get enough to
20 eat. While official national data for Native American
21 households is lacking, previous research in Wash-
22 ington State showed food insecurity among Native
23 households was 2.5 times higher than in White
24 households.

1 (6) The COVID-19 pandemic has deepened
2 longstanding racial disparities and food insecurity.

3 (7) SNAP is the nation's first line of defense
4 against hunger and is especially vital for vulnerable
5 populations. More than 85 percent of all SNAP ben-
6 efits go to households with children, seniors, and
7 persons with disabilities.

8 (8) SNAP helps restore access to healthy food,
9 improves overall health, and reduces poverty. SNAP
10 participation is also associated with educational ad-
11 vancement of children in poverty and improvements
12 in math and reading scores.

13 (9) SNAP has a proven record of effectiveness
14 in promoting food security and health as well as in
15 providing economic stimulus. Each \$1 in SNAP ben-
16 efits during a downturn generates between \$1.50
17 and \$1.80 in economic activity.

18 (10) Studies have also demonstrated that work
19 requirements do not reduce poverty.

20 (11) About 6.1 million individuals are subject to
21 SNAP work requirements and are at risk of losing
22 critical food assistance if they cannot comply.

23 (12) Some live in households with school-aged
24 children where benefit reductions or terminations

1 could jeopardize children’s health, development, and
2 future success.

3 (13) Children in poverty also often depend on
4 pooled resources (including SNAP benefits) from ex-
5 tended family members who do not claim them as
6 dependents.

7 (14) Studies show that health impediments are
8 a primary cause of why many SNAP recipients are
9 unable to meet a work requirement.

10 (15) Work requirements also cause an increase
11 in the administrative bureaucracy, which some stud-
12 ies have shown, cause a significant reduction in
13 SNAP participation.

14 (16) Studies show that Black Americans are
15 particularly vulnerable and are most likely to face
16 recent unemployment and work requirements would
17 disproportionately prevent Black people from having
18 access to this important benefit.

19 (17) Families experiencing homelessness are
20 most likely to leave programs like SNAP when there
21 is a work requirement, thereby increasing their vul-
22 nerability.

23 (18) COVID-19 has made people more vulner-
24 able. A work requirement would serve to only further

1 burden those most at risk during the COVID-19
2 pandemic.

3 **SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS.**

4 (a) **WORK REQUIREMENT.**—Section 6 of the Food
5 and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015) is amended—

6 (1) in subsections (d)(4)(B)(ii)(I)(bb),
7 (d)(4)(N)(iii)(I)(bb), (d)(4)(N)(iv)(II), and
8 (d)(4)(N)(v)(IV) by striking “or subsection (o)”, and
9 (2) by striking subsection (o).

10 (b) **ADDITIONAL ALLOCATIONS FOR STATES THAT**
11 **ENSURE AVAILABILITY OF WORK OPPORTUNITIES.**—Sec-
12 tion 16(h)(1) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7
13 U.S.C. 2025(h)(1)) is amended by striking subparagraph
14 (E).

15 (c) **TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.**—

16 (1) Section 7(i)(1) of the Food and Nutrition
17 Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2016(i)(1)) is amended by
18 striking “section 6(o)(2) of this Act or”.

19 (2) Section 16(h) of the Food and Nutrition
20 Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2025(h)) is amended—

21 (A) in paragraph (1)—

22 (i) in subparagraph (B)—

23 (I) by striking “that—” and all
24 that follows through “(I)”, and

1 (II) by striking “; and” and all
2 that follows through “6(o)”, and
3 (ii) in subparagraph
4 (F)(ii)(III)(ee)(AA) by striking “, individ-
5 uals subject to the requirements under sec-
6 tion 6(o)”, and
7 (B) in paragraph (5)(C)—
8 (i) in clause (ii) by inserting “and” at
9 the end, and
10 (ii) in clause (iii) by striking “; and”
11 and all that follows through “appropriate”.

12 **SEC. 4. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**

13 (a) INTERNAL REVENUE CODE.—Section
14 51(d)(8)(A)(ii) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26
15 U.S.C. 51(d)(8)(A)(ii)) is amended—

16 (1) by striking “family—” and all that follows
17 through “(I)” and inserting “family”, and

18 (2) by striking “, or” and all that follows
19 through “of 2008”.

20 (b) WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY
21 ACT.—The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
22 (29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.) is amended—

23 (1) in section 103(a)(2) by striking subpara-
24 graph (D), and

1 (2) in section 121(b)(2)(B) by striking clause
2 (iv).

3 **SEC. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE; APPLICATION OF AMENDMENTS.**

4 (a) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Except as provided in sub-
5 section (b), this Act and the amendments made by this
6 Act shall take effect 180 days after the date of enactment
7 of this Act.

8 (b) APPLICATION OF AMENDMENTS.—

9 (1) The amendments made by section 2 shall
10 not apply with respect to an allotment issued under
11 the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011
12 et seq.) before the effective date of this Act.

13 (2) The amendments made by section 3(a) shall
14 not apply to individuals hired before the expiration
15 of the 90-day period that begins on the effective
16 date of this Act.