

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5215

To amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to require that supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits be calculated with reference to the cost of the low-cost food plan as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 12, 2016

Ms. ADAMS (for herself, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. MOORE, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to require that supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits be calculated with reference to the cost of the low-cost food plan as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture, and for other purposes.

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 “Closing the Meal Gap
5 Act of 2016”.

1 **SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS.**

2 (a) CALCULATION OF PROGRAM BENEFITS.—The
3 Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.)
4 is amended—

5 (1) in section 3 (7 U.S.C. 2012)—

6 (A) by striking subsection (u),

7 (B) by redesignating subsections (n)
8 through (t) as subsections (o) through (u), re-
9 spectively, and

10 (C) by inserting after subsection (m) the
11 following:

12 “(n) ‘Low-cost food plan’ means the diet required to
13 feed a family of four persons, consisting of a man and
14 a woman nineteen through fifty, a child six through eight,
15 and a child nine through eleven years of age, determined
16 in accordance with the Secretary’s calculations. The cost
17 of such diet shall be the basis for uniform allotments for
18 all households regardless of their actual composition, ex-
19 cept that the Secretary shall—

20 “(1) make household-size adjustments (based
21 on the unrounded cost of such diet) taking into ac-
22 count economies of scale;

23 “(2) make cost adjustments in the low-cost food
24 plan for Hawaii and the urban and rural parts of
25 Alaska to reflect the cost of food in Hawaii and
26 urban and rural Alaska;

1 “(3) make cost adjustments in the separate
2 low-cost food plans for Guam, and the Virgin Is-
3 lands of the United States, to reflect the cost of food
4 in those States, but not to exceed the cost of food
5 in the 50 States and the District of Columbia; and

6 “(4) on October 1, 2017, and each October 1
7 thereafter, adjust the cost of the diet to reflect the
8 cost of the diet in the preceding June, and round the
9 result to the nearest lower dollar increment for each
10 household size.”,

11 (2) in section 8(a) (7 U.S.C. 2017(a))—

12 (A) by striking “thrifty food plan” each
13 place it appears, and inserting “low-cost food
14 plan”, and

15 (B) by striking “8 percent” and inserting
16 “10 percent”,

17 (3) in section 16(c)(1)(A)(ii) (7 U.S.C.
18 2025(c)(1)(A)(ii))—

19 (A) in subclause (I) by striking “for fiscal
20 year 2014, at an amount not greater than \$37”
21 and inserting “for fiscal year 2017, at an
22 amount not greater than \$50”, and

23 (B) in subclause (II)—

24 (i) by striking “June 30, 2013” and
25 inserting “June 30, 2016”, and

1 (ii) by striking “thrifty food plan”
2 and inserting “low-cost food plan”, and

3 (4) in section 19(a)(2)(A) (7 U.S.C.
4 2028(a)(2)(A))—

5 (A) in clause (i) by striking “and” at the
6 end,

7 (B) in clause (ii)—

8 (i) by striking “each fiscal year there-
9 after” and inserting “each of the fiscal
10 years 2004 through 2016”, and

11 (ii) by striking the period at the end
12 and inserting a semicolon, and

13 (C) by adding at the end the following:

14 “(iii) for fiscal year 2017,
15 \$2,650,000,000; and

16 “(iv) subject to the availability of ap-
17 propriations under section 18(a), for fiscal
18 year 2018 and each fiscal year thereafter,
19 the amount determined under clause (iii),
20 as adjusted by the percentage by which the
21 low-cost food plan has been adjusted under
22 section 3(n)(4) between June 30, 2017,
23 and June 30 of the immediately preceding
24 fiscal year.”.

1 (b) STANDARD MEDICAL EXPENSE DEDUCTION.—
2 Section 5(e)(5) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
3 (7 U.S.C. 2014(e)(5)) is amended—

4 (1) in subparagraph (A) by striking “an excess
5 medical” and all that follows through the period at
6 the end, and inserting “a standard medical deduc-
7 tion or to a medical expense deduction of actual
8 costs for the allowable medical expenses incurred by
9 the elderly or disabled member, exclusive of special
10 diets.”, and

11 (2) by adding at the end the following:

12 “(D) The standard medical expense deduc-
13 tion shall be equal to \$140 for fiscal year 2017,
14 and for each subsequent fiscal year shall be
15 equal to the applicable amount for the pre-
16 ceding fiscal year as adjusted to reflect changes
17 for the 12-month period ending the preceding
18 June 30 in the Consumer Price Index for All
19 Urban Consumers: Medical Care published by
20 the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Depart-
21 ment of Labor, except that for any such fiscal
22 year the State agency may establish a greater
23 standard medical expense deduction that satis-
24 fies cost neutrality standards established by the
25 Secretary for such fiscal year.”.

1 (c) ELIMINATION OF CAP OF EXCESS SHELTER EX-
2 PENSES.—Section 5(e)(6) of the Food and Nutrition Act
3 of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2014(e)(6)) is amended—

4 (1) by striking subparagraph (B), and

5 (2) by redesignating subparagraphs (C) and
6 (D) as subparagraphs (B) and (C), respectively.

7 (d) WORK REQUIREMENT.—Section 6(o)(3) of the
8 Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o)(3))
9 is amended—

10 (1) in subparagraph (D) by striking “or” at the
11 end,

12 (2) in subparagraph (E) by striking the period
13 at the end and inserting “; or”, and

14 (3) by adding at end the following:

15 “(F) not offered a position in a program
16 described in subparagraph (B) or (C) of para-
17 graph (2).”.

18 (e) FUNDING OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PRO-
19 GRAMS.—Section 16(h)(1)(E)(ii)(II) of the Food and Nu-
20 trition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2025(h)(1)(E)(ii)(II)) is
21 amended by inserting “subparagraphs (A) through (E) of”
22 after “under”.

23 (f) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

1 (1) FOOD AND NUTRITION ACT OF 2008.—The
2 Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et
3 seq.) is amended—

4 (A) in section 10 (7 U.S.C. 2019) by strik-
5 ing “3(p)” and inserting “3(q)”,

6 (B) in section 11 (7 U.S.C. 2012)—

7 (i) in subsection (a)(2) by striking
8 “3(t)(1)” and inserting “3(u)(1)”, and

9 (ii) in subsection (d)—

10 (I) by striking “3(t)(1)” each
11 place it appears and inserting
12 “3(u)(1)”, and

13 (II) by striking “3(t)(2)” each
14 place it appears and inserting
15 “3(u)(2)”,

16 (C) in section 19(a)(2)(A)(ii) (7 U.S.C.
17 (a)(2)(A)(ii)) by striking “3(u)(4)” and insert-
18 ing “3(n)(4)”, and

19 (D) in section 27(a)(2) (7 U.S.C.
20 2036(a)(2))—

21 (i) in subparagraph (C) by striking
22 “3(u)(4)” and inserting “3(n)(4)”, and

23 (ii) in subparagraph (E) by striking
24 “3(u)(4)” and inserting “3(n)(4)”.

1 (2) LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE
2 ACT OF 1981.—Section 2605(f)(2)(A) of the Low-In-
3 come Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42
4 U.S.C. 8624(f)(2)(A)) is amended—

5 (A) by striking “5(e)(6)(C)(iv)(I)” and in-
6 serting “5(e)(6)(B)(iv)(1)”, and

7 (B) by striking “(7 U.S.C.
8 2014(e)(6)(C)(iv)(I))” and inserting “(7 U.S.C.
9 2014(e)(6)(B)(iv)(I))”.

10 (g) TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.—The Food and Nu-
11 trition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) is amended—

12 (1) in section 5(a) (7 U.S.C. 2014(a)) by strik-
13 ing “3(n)(4)” each place it appears and inserting
14 “3(m)(4)”,

15 (2) in section 8(f)(1)(A)(i) (7 U.S.C.
16 2017(f)(1)(A)(i)) by striking “3(n)(5)” and inserting
17 “3(m)(5)”, and

18 (3) in section 17(b)(1)(B)(iv)(III)(aa) (7 U.S.C.
19 2016(b)(1)(B)(iv)(III)(aa)) by striking “3(n)” and
20 inserting “3(m)”.

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

22 (a) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Except as provided in sub-
23 section (b), this Act and the amendments made by this
24 Act shall take effect on October 1, 2016.

1 (b) APPLICATION OF AMENDMENTS.—The amend-
2 ments made by subsections (b), (c), and (f)(2) shall not
3 apply with respect to certification periods that begin be-
4 fore October 1, 2016.

○