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MALNUTRITION CONNECTION

Providing Information to Share on Malnutrition Awareness and Advocacy

Nourishing Our Golden Years Act

Over 40 years ago, Congress authorized the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) to help address food insecurity. CSFP (also known as the “Senior Food Box Program” in some areas) annually serves nearly 700,000 low-income adults age 60 and up, with monthly shelf-stable, nutrient rich foods. While CSFP application requirements vary by state, current federal regulation requires recertification of eligible older adults every 6 to 12 months (depending on the state), which can be burdensome.

The [Nourishing Our Golden Years Act](#) seeks to fix these requirements for older Americans by:

- Setting a minimum CSFP certification period of one year; and
- Providing states the flexibility to extend the CSFP certification period beyond the set minimum, as long as participants’ address, interest in the program, and income is evaluated annually.

One of the Act’s lead sponsors, Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) stated, “Federal nutrition assistance, like the Senior Food Box Program, is a vital lifeline for many seniors. The Nourishing Our Golden Years Act would make it easier for older adults to benefit from the Senior Food Box Program and reduces the likelihood that a recipient would miss a re-certification deadline and become ineligible. This bill would help us fulfill our sacred responsibility to older Americans by ensuring they have access to nutritious foods.”

The Act is important because recertification requirement is often burdensome for states, administering agencies, as well as seniors. Sometimes it results in the unintentional removal of seniors from the program. Older Americans who qualify for CSFP are generally on a fixed income with little to no change in their income on a yearly basis. Advocates report that the burden of recertification is a barrier to receiving nutrition assistance and that it is common for eligible older adults to be removed from the program because they are unable to recertify their eligibility in time. Some states that administer CSFP are interested in extending the certification period, to reduce administrative burden and reduce the churn of individuals who qualify for CSFP.

CSFP has in part been successful through the years because the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) uses its buying power to purchase specific nutrient-rich foods at wholesale prices for distribution to eligible seniors. The average cost of a CSFP food package is approximately \$20, while the retail value of each package is closer to \$50.

Social Media Content:

- Encourage your senators to support the Nourishing Our Golden Years Act to help older Americans access nutrient rich foods and end #malnutrition <https://bit.ly/2EDaSfl>

Learn more about the Nourishing Our Golden Years Act and how it can help seniors benefit from the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and end #malnutrition <https://bit.ly/2HkJs3r>