



## NHFPI Informational Testimony to the New Hampshire Senate Health and Human Services Committee

On January 26, 2022, NHFPI was invited to present informational testimony surrounding SNAP Outreach and the findings of NHFPI's Issue Brief [The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: State Outreach to Eligible Populations](#), published on October 7, 2021. A recording of the testimony is available to view [here](#).

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Good morning, Chairman Bradley and Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

My name is Michael Polizzotti, and I am a Policy Analyst with the New Hampshire Fiscal Policy Institute. NHFPI is a nonprofit, non-partisan, independent, policy research organization located here in Concord. We examine the State Budget, the state economy, and the economic security of individuals and families in the Granite State – with a particular focus on those with lower and moderate incomes.

I'd like to share the results of research that NHFPI conducted surrounding outreach for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in New Hampshire. I have provided you all with a copy of our October 2021 Issue Brief, which includes additional details and methodological discussions as well.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, also known as "SNAP", is officially known as the "New Hampshire Food Stamp Program" in the state – and it provided food assistance to more than 68,000 individuals in New Hampshire in December 2021. Of this number, about 26,000 were children.

SNAP provides nutrition assistance to those with lower incomes and few resources. The benefits are entirely federally-funded. These benefits provide significant economic stimulus, in addition to helping individuals and families afford food. Working to ensure that eligible Granite Staters are enrolled in SNAP is key to drawing down these federal dollars to aid adults and children facing food insecurity, and for stimulating local economies, particularly when an economy is weak. Moody's Analytics estimated that each additional dollar of SNAP benefits paid in the first quarter of 2021 would produce a \$1.61 increase in economic output by the end of the year, and other researchers have estimated similar multiplier effects.

Program outreach can play a significant role providing information about SNAP - including eligibility guidelines, informational resources, and directions for how to apply. This sort of outreach may result in a greater uptake among eligible populations in the state. NHFPI analysis found that up to 17,000

children and thousands more adults may have been eligible for SNAP, but were not enrolled in the program, immediately prior to the pandemic.

With an outreach plan approved by the United States Department of Agriculture, half of the costs associated with a SNAP Outreach plan will be covered by federal dollars, and the remaining half can be funded by the state or through other sources, such as in-kind donations raised by non-profit organizations.

NHFPI's analysis discussed two factors potentially impacting SNAP's reach. Notably, New Hampshire has not implemented a SNAP Outreach Plan since 2017. Also, relative to bordering states, New Hampshire places an additional eligibility requirement on certain groups, which excludes many households with lower incomes who do not have children from being eligible.

NHFPI analysis concluded that the combination of these two factors in New Hampshire were correlated with lower rates of income-eligible residents being enrolled in SNAP during 2019, when compared to other states.

The data show that Maine, Massachusetts, and Vermont enrolled a larger percentage of their low-income residents in SNAP during 2019 – and these states all had federally-approved outreach plans more recently and consistently than New Hampshire in recent years.

As the state continues to recover from the lingering economic challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic - greater program outreach and participation in SNAP may aid groups disproportionately impacted by the pandemic - and provide key economic stimulus for a more equitable recovery across the state.

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Additional information and sourcing are available in NHFPI's October 7, 2021 Issue Brief titled [The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: State Outreach to Eligible Populations](#), available online at [www.nhfpi.org](http://www.nhfpi.org).