

This lists all answers to Question Four of North Carolina Health News' voter guide questionnaire. Unless otherwise noted, the answers were given directly to one of our reporters.

Question 4: How do you think the country's food stamps system is working? Are there any changes you would push for?

[NC 1](#)

G.K. Butterfield: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is our most effective anti-hunger program, helping 1 in 8 Americans — mostly children, seniors, or people with disabilities — put food on the table. According to a January 2018 profile of SNAP households released through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, SNAP provided food benefits to a monthly average of more than 1.56 million North Carolinians in 2016. I have and will continue to push for bipartisan support for critical programs such as SNAP, and I will fight proposals to cut funding for these programs. I also support expanding the use of SNAP benefits to include things like health care products.

Roger W. Allison did not answer the survey.

[NC 2](#)

George Holding did not answer the survey.

Linda Coleman did not answer the survey.

Jeff Matemu did not answer the survey.

[NC 3](#)

Walter Jones did not answer the survey.

[NC 4](#)

David Price: I believe that we should provide the resources needed to meet the growing demand for nutrition assistance by children and low-to-moderate income families, particularly in the midst of our nation's current economic challenges. More than ever, I recognize the importance of providing vulnerable populations with access to nutritious meals and support for their health and well-being, which is why I have advocated for robust funding for programs like the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). SNAP is the cornerstone of federal nutrition programs and provides an important safety net for more than 47 million low-income individuals, nearly half of whom are children. Unfortunately, House Republicans included changes to SNAP in their version of the 2018 Farm Bill that would have significantly reduced benefits for Americans all over the country and instead redirect that money to untested, state-implemented work programs. Because of this, I voted against the Farm Bill and have advocated for changes in the Farm Bill that will preserve the integrity of the program and the benefits they provide to American families.

As we seek to combat food insecurity more comprehensively, there are other promising approaches that could complement SNAP and other family-based benefits programs. I am a strong supporter, for example, of efforts to make school breakfast and lunch universally available at no cost and to remove the stigma associated with reduced-price school meals.

Barbara Howe: The food stamps system is working to keep people dependent on government. I would work to scale back the food stamp program to offer temporary assistance in only the direst of situations. I would much rather see private churches and charities provide this kind of aid. They are more efficient and their work is voluntary.

Steve A. Von Loor did not answer our survey.

[NC 5](#)

Virginia Foxx did not answer the survey.

DD Adams: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, is one of the most successful means-tested

programs run by the USDA. I am particularly pleased with the ability of users to make purchases at Farmers Markets.

The proposed Farm Bill: this year's Farm Bill guts strips \$23.3 billion from the SNAP program, which would leave an estimated one million households with little to no food assistance.

SNAP works, and it works for those who need it the most. It has been incredibly successful in alleviating hunger, lifting people out of poverty, and supporting our economy and we to protect this invaluable program.

One particular policy change that concerns me involves young adults —including youth aging out of foster care, young adults experiencing homelessness, low-income college students, and young adults who were formerly incarcerated—also face a number of other challenges, any policy changes that could reduce their access to food assistance should be based firmly in the evidence of what works for this age group.

[NC 6](#)

Mark Walker did not answer our survey.

Ryan Watts did not answer our survey.

[NC 7](#)

David Rouzer did not answer the survey.

Dr. Kyle Horton: The political games that are played around food stamps need to stop, because there are many seniors, disabled Americans, veterans, and kids going hungry as they are caught in the crosshairs of a deceptive dialogue about food stamps. Recent proposed changes and reforms would have risked millions of Americans food assistance, and many kids would no longer have qualified for free and reduced-price school meals. While the dialogue around reform and work requirements sounds good, it actually would've created a state-run training bureaucracy under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) that's

costly and that's never been proven to move people out of poverty. We need to address waste and fraud, no question, but also we need understand that SNAP participation is linked to being healthier—lowering health care costs and improving health outcomes for individuals in poverty. Always remember that food stamps are a tremendous stimulator of our economy—every \$1 investment generates \$1.70 in economic activity. To improve food stamps, we should be innovating to link recipients with healthier and locally-sourced agriculture, including at farmers markets which would also provide business to protect smaller family farms.

[NC 8](#)

Richard Hudson did not answer our survey.

Frank McNeill did not answer our survey.

[NC 9](#)

Mark Harris: There's a proposal that has been on the table with the farm bill that would require individuals that are physically able to either be getting a job, in school, or in job training in order to continue to receive food stamps. I think that was a great proposal, [but I'm] not sure that it's going to actually pass. I think the Democrats have somewhat held that up over that one issue. I'm not quite sure what the future of that holds.

I think the goal is for people that are on food stamps to not be reliant on them and to get off of them eventually. That should be the goal of any of our programs, for folks that are physically able to work. I think that is probably something that will come in the future, and I certainly would be in favor of.

Dan McCready: Thankfully, we're seeing lower enrollment in food stamps as the economy has begun to recover. In Washington, I will work to help anyone who is looking for work be able to do so.

Jeff Scott: As the anti-corruption candidate, I am far more concerned about corporate welfare and private-public partnerships designed to milk the savings

tax dollars from working Americans. Large scale consumer welfare programs don't work very well for recipients or taxpayers, but they do work well for administrators and other corporate benefactors. Around 42 million Americans participated in the food stamp program last year. Many people in emergency situations utilize benefits honorably, and people who suffer from difficult conditions through no fault of their own require a safety net. Food stamp programs should be limited to genuine and transitory misfortune and should not be promoted by administrators as a first option. We know also that states and localities are better suited to provide this form of relief.

Extended answer on the separation of state and food:

Government intrusion into the American diet and food supply has had poor results. The American diet is too high in sugars and simple carbs. The scares over dietary fat and other mistaken nutritional guidelines show that politicized science and Federal power over food is dangerous to health. The food industry is complex and consumer choice and experimentation can best adapt to changing needs and popular trends. When food stamps are used for sugary junk food, that is a grave disservice to those in need and those who want to conscientiously help them. Taxpayer generosity should not extend to paying the bill for lifestyle choices related to poor diet and lack of basic food education. In Congress, my focus will be on stopping corporate welfare, and not consumer welfare. My target is well-funded agencies tied to business interest where administrators are enriched while customers are ignored. I will support efforts to offer genuine relief to people who suffer conditions that exhaust privately and locally available remedies.

[NC 10](#)

Patrick McHenry did not answer our survey.

David Wilson Brown: I know that it's successful in bridging the gap for a lot of families. I'm a big proponent of moving to requiring companies that operate in the US to pay people living wage. I would hope that a big benefit of that would be not needing social safety net programs as much.

Essentially, we're paying the bill to cover the gaps for companies that are making record profits but are not paying their people. [...] I think that it shouldn't be made more restrictive, but I hope that we can put some policies in place that make it less necessary if possible.

I think those putting more restrictions in place are doing it because the Right seems to want to punish people for ending up in poverty, whether it be by personal actions or via circumstances of birth. As much as they talk about people pulling themselves up by their boot straps, they certainly want to own every piece of leather that someone could potentially build a boot out of.

Kids are often born into situations where their parents have less and it's not their fault. It's our job as society to help bridge those gaps so that they can succeed and they can get past that and do the bootstrap-pulling that we want people to be able to do.

[NC 11](#)

Mark Meadows did not answer our survey.

Clifton B. Ingram did not answer our survey.

Phillip Price: I'd really have to study it some more.

[NC 12](#)

Alma Adams: I sit on the committee on Agriculture, the Subcommittee on Nutrition. Right now, in the 12th district, we have 161,000 people who are food insecure; 50,000 of those [are] children who go to bed hungry every night. I believe that we need to make sure that everyone is able to have the food that they need when they need it. SNAP [is] via the farm bill, which we have not authorized yet. I don't know if we will. It may just go on the way it is. Part of the debate in that committee was to get rid of SNAP.

Folks who get SNAP benefits work every day; these are the working poor people. We need to make sure that people who work hard every day are able to feed their

families. That's why they're working two, three jobs, because their money and their food runs out before the month.

We need to increase what we're doing there because we have so many people who are hungry. We have food deserts, particularly in this 12th district. People just can't get food. These hurricanes [have] created a problem for people in the eastern part of the state, and the rural areas where the stores have not been able to come in, where farmers have actually lost much of their product. It's a real problem. SNAP is absolutely necessary. We have too many hungry people. If your belly doesn't growl, then you don't understand the pain that I have because I don't have food.

Paul Wright did not answer our survey, but he did provide a statement.

[NC 13](#)

Ted Budd did not answer our survey.

Kathy Manning did not answer our survey.

Tom Bailey did not answer our survey.