

NEWS

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ARRA: STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES IN MICHIGAN

WASHINGTON, DC, February 17, 2010 -- Today, USDA Under Secretary Kevin Concannon marked the one year anniversary of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, also known as the stimulus or recovery package, by announcing that ARRA invested more than \$8 billion in local economies to feed the hungry through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly the Food Stamp Program with approximately \$830 million more invested each month. In addition, through the Emergency Food Assistance program, States received an additional \$150 million to support local food banks, food pantries and soup kitchens.

“Improving the nutrition and health of all Americans is a top priority for the Obama Administration. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is an integral part of the national nutrition safety net,” said Concannon. “SNAP is now serving over 38 million low-income Americans each month proving that never before in history have our nutrition programs been more critical. SNAP is an important contribution to fighting hunger and provides needed resources to communities.”

ARRA increased benefits for recipients of SNAP and provided nearly \$300 million to help States administer SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program. SNAP also provides a significant boost to local economies. For every \$5 in new SNAP benefits, as much as \$9.20 is generated in total economic activity.

“By injecting immediate revenue streams into local business, SNAP helps accomplish another primary goal of ARRA by stimulating the American economy,” said Concannon. “Every time a family uses SNAP benefits to put healthy food on the table, it benefits the store and the employees where the purchase was made, the truck driver who delivered the food, the warehouses that stored it, the plant that processed it, and the farmer who produced the food in the first place.”

Currently, SNAP helps 1,670,746 in Michigan put more healthy food on the table, reaching over 27 percent more people than the previous year. The beauty of the program is that it expands and contracts based on economic conditions. ARRA money provides participating SNAP families of four, for instance, an additional \$80 each month to purchase nutritious food. Since April 2009, ARRA provided an additional \$347,195,314 in benefits and administrative support to strengthen individuals and communities in Michigan. Through the Emergency Food Assistance

Program, Michigan received over \$4.9 million in food and administrative expenses to support local food banks, pantries and soup kitchens. To help schools provide nutritious and safe meals the State received over \$2.5 million.

In addition ARRA also provided infrastructure support to the National School Lunch Program, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations – to make them even stronger.

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service oversees 15 nutrition assistance programs that form a national safety net against hunger. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly the Food Stamp Program, is our largest nutrition program serving more than 38 million people each month, half of whom are children.