



WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

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WISCONSIN CATHOLIC BISHOPS URGE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO PROTECT PROGRAMS THAT HELP FAMILIES IN NEED

The Wisconsin Catholic bishops recently sent a letter to each member of the Wisconsin congressional delegation, urging them to consider how the budget reconciliation bill will impact families, especially those facing financial hardship. The bishops voiced particular concern with proposed cuts to Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and other safety net programs, saying that loss in revenue created by tax cuts cannot be made up by cuts to programs serving those most in need.

The bishops explained that “the Church teaches that the dignity of the human person demands that all people have ‘everything necessary for leading a life truly human’ (*Gaudium et spes*, no. 26) and includes food and healthcare among these necessities” (*Pacem in terris*, no. 11). For this reason, “Medicaid and SNAP must be protected and strengthened to ensure those who rely on these programs for adequate nutrition and healthcare do not lose access to vital services. These programs are important to care for the most vulnerable members of our society and to ensure their basic human needs are met.”

Medicaid is a lifeline for almost 80 million people nationwide who rely on it to access primary care, prescriptions, hospital stays, nursing home care, pregnancy and postpartum care, and more. Nationally in 2023, Medicaid [covered](#) 41% of adults with disabilities, 39% of children, 41% of births, and 61% of spending on long-term care. Here in Wisconsin, Medicaid [served](#) over 1.2 million people in 2024, including 1 in 3 children, 1 in 3 people with disabilities, 4 in 7 nursing home residents, and 1 in 6 Medicare beneficiaries.

SNAP is one of the most effective tools in fighting hunger, providing over 42 million people with consistent access to enough food to support an active, healthy life. SNAP delivers resources directly to low-income households to help them put food on the table. It can quickly respond to surges in demand due to economic downturns and benefits the economy by supporting farmers, businesses, and their workers. SNAP complements the charitable food network, but is able to do so on a much greater scale. In 2024, 705,400 Wisconsinites [received](#) SNAP. Of these, more than 60% were in families with children, 36% had family members who were older adults or disabled, and 45% were in working families.

The bishops closed their letter by urging lawmakers to reject cuts to Medicaid, SNAP, and other vital services that support access to nutrition and health care for those who need it most. They wrote:

Weakening SNAP or Medicaid through structural changes to the programs will act as cuts to these critical supports. Reduced funding, increased burdens for states, eligibility limitations, and work requirements will all result in the loss of benefits and reduced access to life-affirming healthcare and proper nutrition for those in need. Any changes to these programs should prioritize improvements and access to quality care and nutrition over cost savings. A reconciliation bill must prioritize the health and well-being of those who are most vulnerable, including families. Policy changes that result in low-income families and individuals being worse off are unacceptable.

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