May 19, 2020

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities
820 1st Street NE.
Suite 740
Washington, D.C. 20002

To the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities:

Thank you for your letter of April 24, 2020, urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to expand the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Online Purchasing Pilot program to all states and territories and extend eligibility for the program to more retailers.

We recognize that these are uncertain times for all Americans and share your concerns about the effects of the coronavirus on children and adults with disabilities. To ensure states have the flexibilities they need to keep children and families fed, FNS has approved more than 1,500 program flexibilities to States across our 15 nutrition programs.

USDA supports expansion of online purchasing in SNAP. We are working with States and retailers who are interested in, and able to expedite, implementation as they take the steps necessary steps to prepare for, test, and implement online purchasing. To ease the process, the Food and Nutrition Service put together a simplified template for States who wish to enter the online pilot. States that are interested in implementing the online purchasing pilot should contact their respective FNS regional office.

The SNAP online pilot is now approved in 22 states and the District of Columbia, covering more than half of all SNAP households. We are continuing to work with States interested in participating in the pilot. The responsibility is on state agencies, their third-party processors, and any retailers who wish to participate. Adding functionality through the addition of retailers includes inherent risks, such as potential disruption to normal EBT transaction processing if the changes are not thoroughly tested before implementation.

In light of the current COVID-19 situation, States are dealing with increased demands on their resources that they must balance with their ability to execute these necessary changes. USDA is here to support States and provide technical assistance as needed.
For the latest information about all of the efforts FNS is undertaking in response to COVID-19, please visit https://www.fns.usda.gov/coronavirus. We encourage you to reference our online resources with frequency as USDA and FNS continue to respond in real-time.

Thank you for your support as USDA continues its commitment to “Do Right and Feed Everyone.” If you need further assistance, please have a member of your staff contact the Office of Congressional Relations and Intergovernmental Affairs at (202) 720–7095.

Please share this letter with your colleagues below.

Sincerely,

Sonny Perdue
Secretary

Cosigners:
American Diabetes Association
American Network of Community Options & Resources (ANCOR)
Autism Society of America
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Center for Public Representation
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund (DREDF)
Easterseals
Epilepsy Foundation
The Jewish Federations of North America
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Health Law Program
RespectAbility
Special Needs Alliance
The Arc of the United States