



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007

December 28, 2023

The Honorable Kathleen C. Hochul  
Governor  
State of New York  
Executive Chamber, Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul:

New York City is committed to ensuring families have access to nutritious food and urges the State to opt-in for a Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer Program for Children (Summer EBT) program in 2024. Despite a decrease in food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic, the rollback of additional allotments left more families facing food uncertainty. Over two million New York children are affected, with \$200 million in potential summer food aid awaiting a decision. New York State can address this need by opting into the 2024 Summer EBT program.

Research on Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) highlights the positive impact of increased benefits on food insecurity. Summer EBT benefits reduced child food insecurity by nearly one fifth, while expanded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits decreased very low food security rates by one third. Increased Summer EBT allotments also improve dietary quality, with children in households receiving expanded benefits consuming more nutrient-dense foods. The health benefits extend to emotional and community wellbeing, providing families with increased purchasing power, autonomy, and dignity.

Expanded SNAP benefits contribute to community wellbeing, especially for low-income families facing high costs. Many SNAP recipients rely on school meals and free groceries, and during the pandemic, over 79 percent of P-EBT recipients spent stimulus checks on food. Temporary increases in SNAP benefits reduce food insecurity among children, emphasizing the importance of targeted, temporary expansion of Summer EBT benefits to alleviate hardship and support household stability.

Effective communication is crucial for increased redemption of benefits. Schools serve as trusted messengers for program announcements, and State agencies can enhance communication by notifying families of changes before benefits expire. Cross-collaboration maximizes the utilization of expanded benefits. Expanded SNAP benefits are a proven effective delivery mechanism, enabling families to immediately use their purchasing power for nutrient-dense foods at higher redemption rates than other models.

California, New Jersey, and many other states have already opted into Summer EBT. I strongly urge New York State to join these leaders in nutrition and health in opting into and funding 2024 Summer EBT.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric Adams".

Eric Adams  
Mayor