

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 19, 2025

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins,

We write to express serious concern with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) proposed plan to reorganize USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). On July 24, 2025, you released a memorandum declaring your intention to reorganize USDA by relocating USDA staff to five regional hubs across the country.¹ Additionally, we understand there is a preliminary plan to reduce the number of FNS regional offices from seven to four locations: Fort Collins, CO, Raleigh, NC, Dallas, TX, and Indianapolis, IN.² Closing regional offices and moving staff away from many of the communities FNS serves will not improve the ability of FNS to provide localized services. We implore USDA to halt any further efforts to cut and reorganize FNS and instead focus on improving the crucial services FNS provides to fight hunger in the United States.

Even before its planned reorganization, large-scale reductions in staff at FNS have already negatively impacted FNS's ability to complete its mission. Since January 20, 2025, more than 15,000 USDA employees have been forced out of the agency, including approximately 500 FNS staff, most of whom were based outside of Washington, D.C.³ These staff reductions have led to longer wait times for state agencies needing support, delayed financial audits and management evaluations, and overall deterioration of nutrition programming.

Closing regional offices and relocating staff will only exacerbate these issues.

Contrary to USDA's stated purpose, consolidating staff away from the regions they work in makes it more difficult and expensive for FNS employees to get out into the field to do their jobs. This proposed reorganization will lead to reduced oversight quality, diminished technical assistance, and weakened relationships with state partners.

Furthermore, impacts of staff cuts and reorganization will hinder FNS' ability to responsibly oversee the implementation of the damaging changes to SNAP directed by the *One Big Beautiful Bill Act*. States will not receive enough support from FNS to efficiently implement SNAP

¹ Memorandum from Secretary Brooke Rollins, U.S. Department of Agriculture (July 24, 2025) (online at <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/sm-1078-015.pdf>).

² Briefing by Taylor Keel, Legislative Advisor in Office of Congressional Relations, U.S. Department of Agriculture, to Congressional staff (Aug. 6, 2025).

³ *More than 15,000 USDA employees take Trump's offer to resign*, Politico (May 3, 2025) (online at <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/05/03/more-than-15000-employees-resign-agriculture-department-trump-00324834>).

changes, potentially leading to significant issues, including increased costs to states and further limits on program access.

Moreover, USDA has not formally solicited feedback from the stakeholders most affected by this proposed FNS reorganization. State governments, stakeholder partners, direct beneficiaries of FNS programs, and FNS employees and their unions have all been left in the dark about this plan. While USDA opened a 30-day public comment period on its proposed reorganization, detailed information on reorganization plans for the numerous agencies held within USDA, including FNS, has not been made public.⁴

FNS is on the frontlines of our fight against hunger and is responsible for ensuring our kids get school meals, guaranteeing that qualified recipients receive Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, and certifying that vendors and grocery stores can accept those benefits. We applaud any plan that allows FNS to more effectively end hunger in the United States. Unfortunately, no information shared by USDA has inspired confidence that this reorganization plan improves employees' ability to fulfill FNS' mission.

We ask for responses to the following questions related to the FNS reorganization by no later than October 1, 2025.

1. Please provide a written report detailing current plans to reorganize FNS.
2. Please provide all comments relating to the FNS organization, accompanied by a summary that includes the number of comments received, breakdown of how many comments were submitted by employees or public, and the percentage of comments that support the closure of offices and relocation of staff.
3. Has USDA analyzed how relocating multiple FNS regional offices away from their respective states might impact staff's ability to provide direct technical assistance to their states? Please provide any such analyses.
4. What criteria were used to determine the appropriate staffing levels for the National Office/Headquarters? How has the Department decided which positions will be retained at the National level versus shifted to regional hubs?
 - a. How have workload analyses, program needs, or staff expertise been formally assessed to guide these decisions?
5. Will job responsibilities be redefined as a part of this move?
6. What processes will be put in place to prevent duplication of effort or gaps in oversight between regional hubs and any remaining National Office functions?
 - a. How will the Department ensure that program monitoring, data analysis, and policy implementation remain consistent and effective across all regions during and after the transition?

⁴ U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Press Release: USDA Opens Public Comment Period on Department Reorganization Plan* (Aug. 1, 2025) (online at <https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2025/08/01/usda-opens-public-comment-period-department-reorganization-plan>)

7. How were USDA staff engaged or consulted in the planning and decision-making process for this reorganization?
 - a. What opportunities were provided for staff input or feedback on the plan prior to the publication of the Secretary's July 24, 2025 memorandum?
8. What is the timeline for closing FNS regional offices and relocating staff?

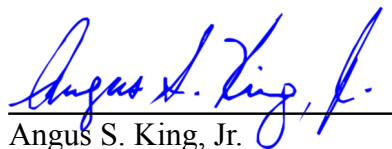
Sincerely,



Peter Welch
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on Agriculture, Nutrition, and
Forestry



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator
Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on Agriculture,
Rural Development, Food
and Drug Administration, and
Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator