

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
STATE OF MONTANA

GREG GIANFORTE  
GOVERNOR



KRISTEN JURAS  
LT. GOVERNOR

March 31, 2026

The Honorable Brooke Rollins  
Secretary  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins:

On behalf of the State of Montana, I write today to submit our State's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Food Restriction Demonstration Waiver Request. This demonstration project aims to improve the health and well-being of Montana's SNAP households by aligning SNAP with its statutory purpose: focusing the use of dollars on healthy foods to help low-income households improve their nutrition and reduce long-term health care costs.

Since taking office, you have worked diligently with President Donald J. Trump and Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. to deliver on the promises made to the American people during the 2024 presidential election. While many issues motivated Americans to cast a ballot for President Trump, his promise to Make America Healthy Again resonated with voters. We've seen the Trump administration prioritize this platform across all of government by revising the food pyramid, launching school fitness initiatives, and ensuring that public dollars go toward the purchase of healthy foods to help improve health outcomes.

Montana, just like every other state across our nation, faces significant public health challenges related to diet and nutrition. Adult obesity in Montana stands at approximately 31 percent, continuing a decade-long upward trend that strains population health and increases Medicaid costs. Additionally, the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services reports that 32 percent of Montana adults report having hypertension, which raises the risk of heart disease, stroke, and heart failure.

We know that a healthy diet is key to improving outcomes. By reducing high-sodium foods and increasing the amount of produce consumed, we can ensure Montanans live happier, healthier lives. The items proposed for restriction are strongly associated with obesity, Type 2 diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. Shifting SNAP dollars away from these products supports healthier choices without reducing benefits, altering eligibility, or limiting access to staple foods.

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This demonstration project directly advances Montana's State Health Improvement Plan, which identifies cardiovascular health as a priority and includes objectives to reduce obesity across all age groups. It also directs federal taxpayer nutrition dollars toward foods that align with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Thrifty Food Plan and the federal Dietary Guidelines for Americans, while maintaining participant choice among thousands of eligible products.

SNAP remains a vital resource for Montana's most vulnerable populations, and this demonstration project will strengthen its effectiveness by ensuring federal nutrition assistance dollars promote healthier diets, reduce diet-related chronic disease, and support families in achieving healthier, more independent futures.

I respectfully request approval of Montana's SNAP Food Restriction Demonstration Waiver Request and look forward to working collaboratively with the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and USDA to implement this important project and improve the lives of Montanans. Should you have any questions about our request, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. My door is always open.

Sincerely,

  
Greg Gianforte  
Governor