

Peer Review Plan

Preliminary Title: Program Design Issues in SNAP: Looking Ahead by Looking Back

Type of Report
(ERR, EIB, EB,
TB, SOR,) ERR

Agency: Economic Research Service [X] Influential Scientific Information
USDA [] Highly Influential Scientific Assessment

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Subject of Review: The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)—formerly the Food Stamp Program—provides participants with electronic benefits that can be used like cash to purchase eligible food items in authorized retail food stores. Over its long history, policymakers have implemented numerous changes in program design in response to changes in the political, economic, and budgetary environment. A number of current issues—such as whether to block grant the program, what types of foods to allow to be purchased with program benefits, and the adequacy and accessibility of benefits—have been raised repeatedly in the past. The response of policymakers to these recurring challenges can impact millions of vulnerable Americans as well as U.S. taxpayers. The primary objective of this report is to expand the understanding of the issues, implications, and tradeoffs associated with various program design features in order to inform public debate on potential changes to SNAP. The report examines the evolution of SNAP, highlighting the major policy changes that have shaped the program over time, the factors influencing these changes, and their implications. The report also examines six major issues currently facing the program. These issues are linked to their precedents, and the tradeoffs faced by policymakers as they address the issues are discussed.

Purpose of Review: The purpose of the review is to ensure the high-quality of the economic analysis, transparent explanation of methods, objective interpretation of results, and effective communication to the intended audience.

Type of Review: [] Panel Review [X] Individual Reviewers
[] Alternative Process (Briefly Explain):

Timing of Review (Est.): Start: 10/26/16 Completed: 4/11/17 Withdrawn: X/X/X

Number of Reviewers: [] 3 or fewer [x] 4 to 10 [] More than 10

Primary Disciplines/Types of Expertise Needed for Review: Economists

Reviewers selected by: [X] Agency [] Designated Outside Organization
Organization's Name:

Opportunities for Public Comment? [] Yes [X] No

If yes, briefly state how and when these opportunities will be provided:

How:

When:

Peer Reviewers Provided with Public Comments? [] Yes [X] No

Public Nominations Requested for Review Panel? [] Yes [X] No