



May 26, 2026

Senator Louis DiPalma,  
Chair Rhode Island Senate Finance Committee

Dear Chairman DiPalma and members of the Committee:

We are pleased to see the Committee considering Senate Resolution 3312, which would provide funding to continue the successful **Eat Well, Be Well** retail SNAP incentive program past its pilot stage, which is slated to expire on June 30.

This first-of-its-kind statewide program doubles the value of the dollar for SNAP users when they purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at participating grocery stores. Since its launch in 2014, the program has helped tens of thousands of Rhode Islanders stretch their monthly budgets and better afford to put healthy, fresh, nutritious food on their tables.

The way the program is designed (SNAP users are automatically enrolled into the program, and additional benefits are immediately loaded onto their SNAP cards at upon checkout) makes it a user-friendly, low-barrier way for families to find significant savings.

It is clear that food insecurity remains one of the most pressing challenges facing Rhode Island. One in three (34%) Rhode Island households experience food insecurity, according to the RI Life Index, a study conducted by Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island and the Brown University School of Public Health. This represents an increase of 8.8 percentage points since 2020.

Food insecurity continues to disproportionately impact households of color. In 2025, 58% of Hispanic/Latino households and 50% of Black/African American households reported inadequate access to food, compared to 27.3% of White households.

The last several years have reinforced that no one entity can solve hunger alone; it will take the intentional collaboration of public, non-profit, and private entities working side-by-side. Without policy intervention and sustained investment, the gap between need and available resources will continue to widen. Rhode Island needs every tool in its toolbox to continue to address this worsening crisis.

The Eat Well, Be Well program has proven itself to be a helpful and effective piece of the puzzle. We are in strong support of its continuation.

Sincerely,

**Melissa Cherney**  
CEO, Rhode Island Community Food Bank