



## Center *for* Public Policy Priorities

900 Lydia Street, Austin, Texas 78702

PH: 512.320.0222 FAX: 512.320.0227 www.cppp.org

### NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
Monday, October 31, 2005

Contact: Lynsey Kluever  
512-320-0222, X112, kluever@cppp.org

### **U.S. House Votes to Cut Food Stamps at the Same Time USDA Finds Texas Leading Nation in Rate of Households at Risk of Hunger**

**Austin, Texas**—On Friday, the House Agriculture Committee terminated food stamp assistance for 300,000 vulnerable people on the very day that the USDA announced that Texas leads the nation in the percentage of households at risk of going hungry (16 percent). Nationwide, 4.4 million people suffered food insecurity last year, almost a million people more than the previous year. “Food insecure” households are those that had difficulty buying enough food because they could not afford it.

Texas will be one of the 10 states most affected by food stamp cuts.

“Cutting food stamps is the last thing Congress should be doing,” said Celia Hagert, policy analyst at the Center for Public Policy Priorities, “It would plunge even more Texans into hunger.”

The legislation approved by the House Agriculture Committee on Friday contained two harmful cuts in the food stamp program, together totaling \$844 million over the next five years, as well as some reductions in agricultural subsidies.

- *Terminating food stamps for 225,000 people, mostly low-income working families with children* for whom the program serves as a critical “work support” to supplement very low wages. This cut was first proposed in the President’s budget, which was submitted to Congress in February.
- *Denying food stamps to 70,000 legal immigrants in an average month, including families with children and some elderly individuals.* Under this provision, legal immigrants will be ineligible for food stamps for seven years after entering the country, even though they may be working taxpayers. This reverses President Bush’s decision in 2002 to restore food stamp benefits to legal immigrants who have been in this country for five years.

The Agriculture Committee bill will be incorporated into a larger “budget reconciliation” bill that the full House is expected to vote on during the week of November 7th, and which is also expected to include harmful Medicaid and child support cuts. Congress is using the special “budget reconciliation” process this year to fast-track budget cuts and tax cuts which, taken together, will increase the deficit by \$35 billion over the next five years.

###