

Bottom Line

Bans and restrictions don't teach us anything about managing our caloric intake and balancing what we eat, drink and do.



650,000+
unique products
in stores

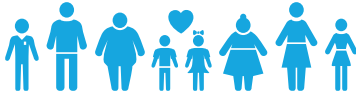
Background & ABA Position

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), has provided a lifeline through temporary food assistance to families who have fallen on hard times, particularly during the global pandemic. Some officials advocate SNAP “reform” through restricting what foods and beverages can be purchased under the program, wrongly suggesting that doing so will save money.

Bans and restrictions don't teach us anything about managing our caloric intake and balancing what we eat, drink and do. With more choices than ever before, many with less sugar or no sugar at all, as well as smaller portion sizes, we make it easy for people to choose the beverage that best fits their day – whether they shop with SNAP benefits or not. We believe everyone needs balance.

Restrictions Only Complicate SNAP, Grow Bureaucracy

- There are more than 650,000 unique products in the grocery store with 12,000-15,000 more introduced every year due to innovation and consumer demand.
- These items would have to be analyzed and categorized to determine what's in and what's out of the SNAP program, putting government in charge of determining “good foods” and “bad foods” and creating even more bureaucracy to the very program many seek to reform.
- Restrictions would create a “food code” administrated by government. Restrictions will not reform the SNAP program nor save any money.
- SNAP restrictions on every day grocery items turn grocery clerks into the “food police” at the check-out counter. There is no simple switch one can flip to parse through the nutritional profile of hundreds of thousands of grocery items in order to determine eligibility.



Restricting SNAP Purchases Won't Make Americans Healthy

- Limiting one small source of calories in the diet won't improve health or reduce obesity.
- Beverages are not driving obesity rates. The latest data from the CDC shows that obesity rates have been going up steadily even though soda consumption has been going down. If the two were connected obesity rates should have gone down as consumption went down — but that isn't the case.
- Obesity is a serious and complex public health challenge that needs to be addressed holistically, not by restricting one segment of the population from accessing one aisle in the grocery store.

SNAP Households Make Purchases Similar to Non-SNAP Households

- A recent USDA study found that SNAP and non-SNAP households make nearly the same purchasing decisions.
- SNAP households are often comprised of working families, and more than 70 percent of SNAP benefits go to families with children.
- 1.7 million veterans receive SNAP benefits.
- SNAP is intended to supplement income for food purchases. It is not the same as WIC which is a nutrition prescription intended for expectant moms and babies. SNAP provides food security for entire families with all their varying dietary needs. After all, a grandmother living with her family does not eat the way her 13-year-old grandson or 3-year-old granddaughter eats.
- The average recipient is on SNAP from 8 to 10 months.