

26. Adopt resolution opposing federal cuts to safety net programs that would result in increased state costs, lower benefit levels, and reduced eligibility for services, and economic harm, and take related actions ()



County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors

Agenda Item Submittal

From: County Executive Office

Subject: Resolution Opposing Federal Cuts to Safety Net Programs

Meeting Date: May 6, 2025

Formal Title: Adopt resolution opposing federal cuts to safety net programs that would result in increased state costs, lower benefit levels, and reduced eligibility for services, and economic harm, and take related actions

Recommended Actions

Adopt resolution opposing federal cuts to safety net programs, and authorize the Board Chair and staff to join efforts to oppose safety net cuts on behalf of County residents.

Executive Summary

Federal safety net programs provide basic needs support to Santa Cruz County residents. Proposals in Washington, D.C. to extend existing tax cuts through budget reconciliation may significantly impact critical programs such as SNAP (CalFresh), Medicaid (Medi-Cal), TANF (CalWORKs), school nutrition programs and many other programs, leading to reduced eligibility, lower benefit levels, and increased costs for the State of California and local governments. This item and resolution have been prepared at the request of the Board Chair in anticipation of the federal budget reconciliation process this summer.

Discussion

In Santa Cruz County, thousands of residents rely on these programs for food, healthcare, and income support. Cuts at the federal level could result in direct harm to children, families, seniors, veterans, and other vulnerable residents, while undermining economic activity generated by safety net spending. The proposed resolution affirms the County's commitment to protecting the health and well-being of its residents and urges the County's Congressional delegation to oppose legislation that would jeopardize these essential programs.

The County has long worked in partnership with federal and state governments to deliver essential services that improve quality of life and promote public health and economic resilience. However, recent Congressional proposals threaten to reverse progress by imposing harsh restrictions or funding cuts to programs that form the backbone of the local safety net.

Impact on Santa Cruz County Residents

- **CalFresh (SNAP):** In March 2025, 41,765 households in Santa Cruz County—including 13,782 children—received CalFresh benefits, with over \$6.5 million spent at local grocery stores monthly. Proposed federal changes could reduce participation by an estimated 34%.
- **Medi-Cal (Medicaid):** One-third of all County residents (89,576 individuals), including 57% of children and nearly 9,000 seniors, rely on Medi-Cal. Any rollback in federal funding or changes to cost-sharing could jeopardize coverage and strain local health systems.

- **Economic Ripple Effect:** According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, every \$1 in SNAP generates up to \$1.80 in economic activity, supporting jobs in agriculture, food distribution, and retail. Cuts would harm not only recipients but the broader economy.
- **Broader Impacts:** The changes under consideration could also affect TANF (CalWORKs), school nutrition, and housing supports, with ripple effects for public health, educational outcomes, and workforce participation.

Federal proposals to roll back eligibility and benefit levels or make it more difficult to access benefits through work requirements and other onerous requirements, would significantly impact residents who rely on these programs, including children, economically disadvantaged families, people experiencing homelessness and more. National organizations—including the National Association of Counties (NACo), National League of Cities (NLC), and U.S. Conference of Mayors—have raised bipartisan concerns regarding the impact of these proposals, and local governments across the nation are calling on Congress to protect vulnerable populations and avoid shifting federal responsibilities onto already strained state and local budgets.

Financial Impact

Reduction in benefits would create significant financial impacts to County operations across departments.

Strategic Initiatives

Equity Framework - County Facilities & Infrastructure

Operational Plan - Comprehensive Health & Safety, Attainable Housing, Dynamic Economy

Climate Action - Government Operations

Submitted By:

Carlos J. Palacios, County Executive Officer

Recommended By:

Carlos J. Palacios, County Executive Officer

Artificial Intelligence Acknowledgment:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) did not significantly contribute to the development of this agenda item.

BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

RESOLUTION NO. _____

On the motion of Supervisor:

Duly seconded by Supervisor:

The following resolution is adopted:

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO FEDERAL FUNDING CUTS TO
SAFETY NET PROGRAMS THAT HELP PROVIDE BASIC NEEDS SUPPORT TO
CITIZENS OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

WHEREAS, the County of Santa Cruz is home to 262,406 people and is a growing and thriving county with many employment, education and recreation opportunities for children, adults, and older adults; and

WHEREAS, as with many counties, cities and towns in California and across the nation, a percentage of the population of seniors, veterans, students and families faces difficulty meeting basic needs each month, even when working full or part time, with a current estimated 12.5% U.S. poverty rate including 11.2% in Santa Cruz County, according to the U.S. Census Bureau; and

WHEREAS, safety net programs such as CalFresh (known as SNAP at the federal level), Medi-Cal (known as Medicaid federally), CalWORKs (TANF at the federal level), school-based nutrition programs, and other programs operated by cities, counties, and states under federal rules and regulations help to increase food, healthcare and housing security and the overall quality of life for thousands of Santa Cruz County residents each month, while also supporting the local economy through millions of dollars of expenditures at local grocers, health care providers, and other vital businesses; and

WHEREAS, in Santa Cruz County as a whole, 41,765 households received CalFresh benefits including 13,782 children, with \$6,537,620 in benefits spent in local stores in March 2025 alone. A rollback to pre-pandemic eligibility levels would result in a 34% reduction in individuals receiving food assistance benefits; and

WHEREAS, 89,576 Santa Cruz County residents (one third of all County residents) receive Medi-Cal coverage, including 27,185 children (57% of all children) and nearly 9,000 seniors age 65 and older. In March 2025, over 8,500 undocumented immigrants received Medi-Cal; and

WHEREAS, current Congressional proposals at the federal level, if approved, could result in substantial cuts to safety net programs, ranging from changes to eligibility and benefit levels, imposition of harsh work requirements, significant reduction in Community Eligibility Provision eligibility levels, and establishing or increasing state shares of cost for programs where today there are no state shares (such as in CalFresh/SNAP) or where federal matching funds are today an uncapped entitlement (such as in Medi-Cal/Medicaid); and

WHEREAS, the level of cuts under discussion to critical safety net programs would, if approved, almost certainly require significant state funding to maintain eligibility and benefits or otherwise result in cuts to the level of benefits received in these programs, who is eligible for the programs, and under what rules and requirements; and

WHEREAS, according to the USDA Economic Research Service, each \$1 in SNAP creates as much as \$1.80 in total economic activity as benefits are spent in grocery stores, and every \$1 billion in SNAP benefits creates 13,560 jobs across our farming, trucking, grocery, and other sectors. Proposed cuts will not only create hunger but harm our food and farming economy; and

WHEREAS, these potential cuts to safety net programs would have a broadly negative impact on the quality of life and economy in Santa Cruz County, not only those who directly receive benefits through these programs but for all residents; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties, the National League of Cities, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and other leading national organizations representing local governments have sent a bipartisan letter to Congress expressing significant concerns with cuts to SNAP and other programs.

NOW THEREFORE, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz hereby resolves and orders that:

1. The County opposes federal cuts to safety net programs that would result in increased state costs, lower benefit levels, and reduced eligibility for services as well as create economic harm across numerous economic sectors; and
2. The County urges its Congressional delegation members to protect the most vulnerable citizens and support economic activity by voting against legislation that would, directly or indirectly, result in cuts to safety net programs.

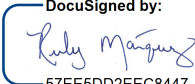
PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz, State of California, this ____ day of _____, 20____, by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

Chair of the Board of Supervisors

ATTEST: _____
Clerk of the Board

Approved as to Form:

DocuSigned by:

57EE5DD2EEC8447...

5/1/2025

Office of the County Counsel
Ruby Marquez

Certificate Of Completion

Envelope Id: D0592EFF-324A-4D07-88DD-536EFCE6ABA0

Status: Completed

Subject: Complete with Docusign: BOS Resolution Opposing Federal Cuts CoCoRM 05.01.25.pdf

Source Envelope:

Document Pages: 3

Signatures: 1

Envelope Originator:

Certificate Pages: 4

Initials: 0

CBD eSignature

AutoNav: Enabled

701 Ocean Street

Envelopeld Stamping: Enabled

Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Time Zone: (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)

cbd.esignature@santacruzcountyca.gov

IP Address: 10.103.81.9

Record Tracking

Status: Original

Holder: CBD eSignature

Location: DocuSign

5/1/2025 11:22:09 AM

cbd.esignature@santacruzcountyca.gov

Security Appliance Status: Connected

Pool: FedRamp

Storage Appliance Status: Connected

Pool: County of Santa Cruz

Location: Docusign

Signer Events

Signature

Timestamp

Ruby Marquez

DocuSigned by:

57EE5DD2EEC8447...

Sent: 5/1/2025 11:22:57 AM

Ruby.Marquez@santacruzcountyca.gov

Viewed: 5/1/2025 11:26:27 AM

Santa Cruz County Counsel's Office

Signed: 5/1/2025 11:28:11 AM

Security Level: Email, Account Authentication
(None)

Signature Adoption: Uploaded Signature Image

Using IP Address: 63.194.190.100

Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure:

Accepted: 3/25/2025 1:02:02 PM

ID: fb88eb14-13ef-451e-ba60-ef5406b9266a

In Person Signer Events

Signature

Timestamp

Editor Delivery Events

Status

Timestamp

Agent Delivery Events

Status

Timestamp

Intermediary Delivery Events

Status

Timestamp

Certified Delivery Events

Status

Timestamp

Carbon Copy Events

Status

Timestamp

Witness Events

Signature

Timestamp

Notary Events

Signature

Timestamp

Envelope Summary Events

Status

Timestamps

Envelope Sent

Hashed/Encrypted

5/1/2025 11:22:57 AM

Certified Delivered

Security Checked

5/1/2025 11:26:27 AM

Signing Complete

Security Checked

5/1/2025 11:28:11 AM

Completed

Security Checked

5/1/2025 11:28:11 AM

Payment Events

Status

Timestamps

Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure

ELECTRONIC RECORD AND SIGNATURE DISCLOSURE

From time to time, County of Santa Cruz (we, us or Company) may be required by law to provide to you certain written notices or disclosures. Described below are the terms and conditions for providing to you such notices and disclosures electronically through the DocuSign system. Please read the information below carefully and thoroughly, and if you can access this information electronically to your satisfaction and agree to this Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure (ERSD), please confirm your agreement by selecting the check-box next to 'I agree to use electronic records and signatures' before clicking 'CONTINUE' within the DocuSign system.

Getting paper copies

At any time, you may request from us a paper copy of any record provided or made available electronically to you by us. You will have the ability to download and print documents we send to you through the DocuSign system during and immediately after the signing session and, if you elect to create a DocuSign account, you may access the documents for a limited period of time (usually 30 days) after such documents are first sent to you. After such time, if you wish for us to send you paper copies of any such documents from our office to you, you will be charged a \$0.00 per-page fee. You may request delivery of such paper copies from us by following the procedure described below.

Withdrawing your consent

If you decide to receive notices and disclosures from us electronically, you may at any time change your mind and tell us that thereafter you want to receive required notices and disclosures only in paper format. How you must inform us of your decision to receive future notices and disclosure in paper format and withdraw your consent to receive notices and disclosures electronically is described below.

Consequences of changing your mind

If you elect to receive required notices and disclosures only in paper format, it will slow the speed at which we can complete certain steps in transactions with you and delivering services to you because we will need first to send the required notices or disclosures to you in paper format, and then wait until we receive back from you your acknowledgment of your receipt of such paper notices or disclosures. Further, you will no longer be able to use the DocuSign system to receive required notices and consents electronically from us or to sign electronically documents from us.

All notices and disclosures will be sent to you electronically

Unless you tell us otherwise in accordance with the procedures described herein, we will provide electronically to you through the DocuSign system all required notices, disclosures, authorizations, acknowledgements, and other documents that are required to be provided or made available to you during the course of our relationship with you. To reduce the chance of you inadvertently not receiving any notice or disclosure, we prefer to provide all of the required notices and disclosures to you by the same method and to the same address that you have given us. Thus, you can receive all the disclosures and notices electronically or in paper format through the paper mail delivery system. If you do not agree with this process, please let us know as described below. Please also see the paragraph immediately above that describes the consequences of your electing not to receive delivery of the notices and disclosures electronically from us.

How to contact County of Santa Cruz:

You may contact us to let us know of your changes as to how we may contact you electronically, to request paper copies of certain information from us, and to withdraw your prior consent to receive notices and disclosures electronically as follows:

To contact us by email send messages to: nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us

To advise County of Santa Cruz of your new email address

To let us know of a change in your email address where we should send notices and disclosures electronically to you, you must send an email message to us at nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us and in the body of such request you must state: your previous email address, your new email address. We do not require any other information from you to change your email address.

If you created a DocuSign account, you may update it with your new email address through your account preferences.

To request paper copies from County of Santa Cruz

To request delivery from us of paper copies of the notices and disclosures previously provided by us to you electronically, you must send us an email to nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us and in the body of such request you must state your email address, full name, mailing address, and telephone number. We will bill you for any fees at that time, if any.

To withdraw your consent with County of Santa Cruz

To inform us that you no longer wish to receive future notices and disclosures in electronic format you may:

- i. decline to sign a document from within your signing session, and on the subsequent page, select the check-box indicating you wish to withdraw your consent, or you may;
- ii. send us an email to nada.algharib@santacruzcounty.us and in the body of such request you must state your email, full name, mailing address, and telephone number. We do not need any other information from you to withdraw consent.. The consequences of your withdrawing consent for online documents will be that transactions may take a longer time to process..

Required hardware and software

The minimum system requirements for using the DocuSign system may change over time. The current system requirements are found here: <https://support.docusign.com/guides/signer-guide-signing-system-requirements>.

Acknowledging your access and consent to receive and sign documents electronically

To confirm to us that you can access this information electronically, which will be similar to other electronic notices and disclosures that we will provide to you, please confirm that you have read this ERSD, and (i) that you are able to print on paper or electronically save this ERSD for your future reference and access; or (ii) that you are able to email this ERSD to an email address where you will be able to print on paper or save it for your future reference and access. Further, if you consent to receiving notices and disclosures exclusively in electronic format as described herein, then select the check-box next to 'I agree to use electronic records and signatures' before clicking 'CONTINUE' within the DocuSign system.

By selecting the check-box next to 'I agree to use electronic records and signatures', you confirm that:

- You can access and read this Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure; and
- You can print on paper this Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure, or save or send this Electronic Record and Disclosure to a location where you can print it, for future reference and access; and
- Until or unless you notify County of Santa Cruz as described above, you consent to receive exclusively through electronic means all notices, disclosures, authorizations, acknowledgements, and other documents that are required to be provided or made available to you by County of Santa Cruz during the course of your relationship with County of Santa Cruz.