

240 Organizations Appeal to Santorum on FSP

More than 240 Pennsylvania organizations have asked Senator Rick Santorum for help in defeating an effort by the U.S. House of Representatives to change the basic structure of the Food Stamp Program (FSP).

The letter expresses alarm about provisions in H.R. 240 that "would profoundly weaken our national food safety net" and "tear America's food safety net into fifty small pieces." The specific provisions include block grants, spending caps and the grant of unprecedented authority for the U.S.D.A. to approve state waiver requests related to the FSP. If these House provisions are adopted by the Senate, the letter states, "the Program would become more complicated, more error-prone, less reliable for needy families and less credible to the general public." The letter's signers include religious congregations, civic organizations, labor unions, health and education associations, representatives of the food industry and other businesses.

According to his staff, Santorum likes the idea of giving states more flexibility to operate social service programs but has not decided whether or not to support the FSP changes proposed by the House. The Senate schedule will require his decision in September.