

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 2, 2025

The Honorable Russ Vought
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Director Vought and Secretary Rollins:

We write to demand full and immediate reimbursement to the State of New Mexico for the \$30 million it was forced to reallocate to provide food assistance to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients for the month of November during the federal government shutdown. Funding SNAP is a federal responsibility, and New Mexican taxpayers should not be penalized for your failure to fulfill your duty.

During the shutdown, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) refused to issue SNAP benefits despite having sufficient funding and transfer authority available to issue full benefits. After multiple court orders, USDA eventually allowed states to issue benefits, but their repeated appeals and conflicting guidance caused further delays and confusion — leaving more working-class Americans needlessly hungry every step of the way. New Mexico’s governor did what the administration would not: she kept children, seniors, and people with disabilities fed. No state should have to raid their own budgets to fix a problem the administration created. In New Mexico, this failure placed more than 450,000 SNAP recipients at immediate risk of going without the food assistance they rely on each month. Fortunately, the State of New Mexico stepped in and provided \$30 million in food assistance to prevent a hunger crisis, protect vulnerable households, ensure continuity across local food systems, and sustain local economies.

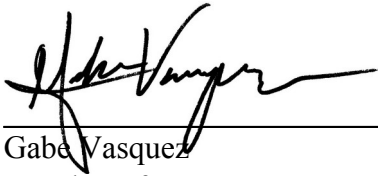
This was not the only federal responsibility New Mexico has been forced to shoulder. In addition to the \$30 million stopgap for SNAP, the state had already reallocated \$162 million to protect residents who would have lost Medicaid coverage and Affordable Care Act (ACA) enhanced premium tax credits because of the Republican tax law. These programs — SNAP, Medicaid, and ACA subsidies — are core federal obligations, and no state should be forced to backfill federal programs. New Mexico acted responsibly under extraordinary circumstances, and it must not bear the long-term financial burden for failures at the federal level.

Congress has already made its intent clear. The *Continuing Appropriations, Agriculture, Legislative Branch, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Extensions Act* includes explicit language under Section 118 authorizing reimbursement to states that used their own funds to cover programs “that would have been paid” by the federal government during the shutdown. The directive is unambiguous: USDA and OMB are required to repay states in full.

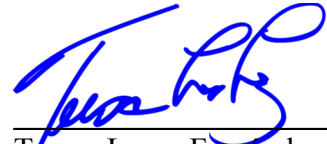
We therefore expect USDA and OMB to move quickly to restore New Mexico's funds and execute the reimbursement without delay. The federal government has a duty to make New Mexico whole, and we insist that responsibility be met immediately.

We stand ready to assist in ensuring this directive is carried out and expect timely confirmation that New Mexico's reimbursement is being processed.


Sincerely,



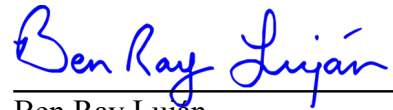
Gabe Vasquez
Member of Congress



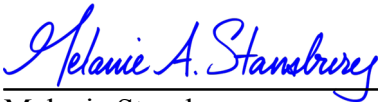
Teresa Leger Fernandez
Member of Congress



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress