

## Be part of the Ryan Budget Truth Squad – Tell how its bad choices would hurt you, your family, and/or your community.

Parent, faith leader, nonprofit service provider, student, physician, local official, teacher, business person... you can see the value of investing in schools, child care, health, nutrition, affordable housing, and the other building blocks of a strong economy.



The Ryan budget, passed by the House [219 – 205](#) on April 10, disinvests in all these important services and more. It would deny health insurance to 40 million people through 2024, by repealing the Affordable Care Act and by slashing Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program by \$732 billion – fully one-quarter of its funding. It would cut SNAP/food stamps by \$137 billion over a decade, reducing or eliminating benefits for many millions. And starting in 2016, it will cut domestic appropriations by about 15 percent (close to three times the size of last year’s sequestration cuts). These cuts will grow to about 30 percent below what inflation-adjusted spending would be in 2024.

These numbers only begin to tell the story of the impact this budget would have. **Your voice needs to be heard**, to show how the protections and investments we count on would be damaged by the Ryan House-passed budget. Whether you have directly benefited from services or are part of a community that is stronger because of them, you can speak about the need for services and the harm that would come (or has already come) from cuts.

Pick a service that is important to you or your community. (1) Say how it has made a valuable difference. (2) Cite the extent of the cuts to programs you care about if the Ryan budget were in place, and say how they would affect you or your community. (3) Express the unfairness of making these cuts while providing even bigger tax breaks for the wealthy and profitable corporations.

**Like this:** SNAP/food stamps makes a real difference for me and my children. It only amounts to \$1.40 per meal, but I have been out of work, and without it I don’t know how I would feed my children. I hear the Ryan budget would slash SNAP so deeply starting in 2019 that either 10 million people would be cut off altogether or the monthly amount would drop – for my two children and me, it would be a cut of \$125 a month. Even now, our refrigerator is empty at the end of the month. A cut like that would mean we would go hungry. I can’t understand why anyone would take food away from children while handing out big tax breaks to millionaires.

That’s just an outline – change it to reflect your reality.

If you do not receive SNAP benefits yourself, you can still see their importance. As a teacher, you see how children can’t concentrate and learn when they haven’t eaten nutritious foods, and how much worse it would be if poor families lost all their SNAP benefits or were cut by \$125 or \$160 a month. As a pediatrician, you see how children’s health and development can be hurt by poor nutrition. The health research project [Children’s HealthWatch](#) has found that while families receiving SNAP may still not always have enough money to afford nutritious food, children in such families receiving SNAP are 16 percent less likely to be at risk for

developmental delays and 12 percent less likely to be in fair or poor health than similarly poor families without SNAP. As a pastor, or social service provider, or simply as a resident of a community or city, you know the damage that dramatically increased hunger would cause. **So do not be silent.**

**Many other cuts.** The White House has estimated the impacts by state for a sampling of cuts that would occur if the Ryan budget became real in 2016. They have estimates for Medicare prescription drugs, Pell Grants, Medicaid, federal aid for low-income school districts (Title I), Special Education aid (IDEA), Head Start, child care, the Social Services Block Grant, job training and employment services, rental housing vouchers, and services to prevent domestic violence. Click [here](#) to see a 50-state table with national totals. (Or click [here](#) to see a Center on Budget and Policy Priorities description of the SNAP cuts, including a 50-state table.) Here are some more examples; you should insert your state data:

**Head Start and K-12 Education Aid:** My child/children in my community benefit from Head Start – it helps them get ready for school. Last year, my child’s Head Start program had to close early because of cuts, and 57,000 children were turned away from Head Start. The Ryan budget would make things much worse – 170,000 fewer children would be in Head Start in 2016, and 3.4 million poor children in elementary schools would face cuts. Without a good education, children will lose the opportunity to move out of poverty.

**Medicaid/State Children’s Health Insurance Program/Affordable Care Act:** Because of Medicaid, my child is able to go to the doctor (give an example of how she or he got needed treatment). (*Or*, for the first time, I was able to buy health insurance!) But the Ryan budget would cut Medicaid by more than one-quarter (\$732 billion) nationwide over the next ten years, not even counting the losses from repealing the new health care law. That could result in denying services to [14 – 20 million people](#), or slashing their benefits. *Or*, the Ryan budget would take away my new health insurance by repealing the Affordable Care Act. The budget would take people’s health care away, but would give each millionaire at least \$200,000 more in tax breaks. That makes no sense.

**Rental Vouchers:** As a mayor/city council member, I see how hard it is for families to afford their rent. Rental vouchers help them to stay in their apartments and avoid homelessness. We are just starting to restore vouchers lost last year because of the sequestration cuts. The Ryan budget would recklessly slash 345,000 vouchers nationwide in 2016 alone – about a 15 per cent cut. Poor families will lose their housing, threatening parents’ employment and children’s education. It will irresponsibly harm our community. (*Or*, My family was on a waiting list for years before getting a rental voucher; we finally have one and it’s meant we don’t have to go without food, heat, and medicine to pay the rent.)

**Make your own statement!** Adapt this general approach to talk about any of the issues listed above – or others you care about. Here are [tips for getting your statement in the public eye](#), as a video clip or in writing.

**For more information:** go to [CHN’s FY 2015 budget page](#), or contact Deborah Weinstein, at [dweinstein@chn.org](mailto:dweinstein@chn.org)