



# **2012 Farm Bill: Changing the Treatment of LIHEAP Receipt in the Calculation of SNAP Benefits**

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## Summary

As Congress formulates the 2012 farm bill—an omnibus bill that reauthorizes a range of agriculture and nutrition programs—program integrity and deficit reduction have been leading themes. One of the cost-saving measures in the farm bill would address the way in which Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits are calculated. The SNAP statute allows for certain deductions from income when calculating a household’s benefit level, including a deduction for excess shelter expenses, which includes utility costs. If a family receives benefits through another federal program, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), this deduction from income can be higher, allowing for a higher SNAP benefit for the household. Both the Senate-passed 2012 farm bill (S. 3240) and the House Agriculture Committee Chairman’s mark limit the deduction associated with LIHEAP, seeking to end a practice that has been referred to as “Heat and Eat.”

Under current law, a SNAP household can use a LIHEAP payment (regardless of the amount of that payment) to document that the household has incurred heating and cooling costs. This documentation triggers a standard utility allowance (SUA), a figure that enters into the SNAP benefit calculation equation. Unless the household is getting the maximum SNAP benefit already, a household’s monthly benefit can increase if the SUA calculation results in an excess shelter deduction.

In addition to current law, current practice also affects the interaction between these benefit programs. While virtually all SNAP states consider LIHEAP in their calculation, approximately 16 states have implemented the so-called “Heat and Eat” policy. “Heat and Eat” is a phrase that the low-income and anti-hunger advocacy community has used to describe state and program policies that leverage nominal (as little as \$1) LIHEAP payments into an increase in households’ SNAP benefits that is larger than the initial LIHEAP payment.

As of the date of the report, two policies have been voted on in Congress that would change current law to limit or eliminate this practice:

- Under Section 4002 of the Senate-passed 2012 farm bill, S. 3240, only LIHEAP payments above \$10 would confer this potential advantage. Payments of \$10 and below would no longer entitle a household to earn an SUA during the benefit calculation process. If a household received less than \$10 in energy assistance, households would have to present alternate documentation of utility costs in order to have utilities factored into calculating their excess shelter deduction.
- Under Section 104 of the Sequester Replacement Reconciliation Act, H.R. 5652, no amount of LIHEAP benefits would garner additional SNAP benefits. Households would have to present alternative documentation of utility costs.

The July 5, 2012, release of the House Agriculture Committee Chairs’ farm bill, scheduled to be marked up on July 11, 2012, also contains the S. 3240 version of this policy.

This report discusses the policy background, details, and context associated with these bills’ changes to the current law of LIHEAP and SNAP SUAs, focusing primarily on S. 3240’s language. The report will be revised to reflect congressional action in this area.

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## Introduction

In light of proposals in the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, particularly the Senate-passed 2012 farm bill, this report was prepared to explain the interrelationship of policies and practices in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Section 4002 of the Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2012, S. 3240, addresses this issue. While under current law SNAP recipients who also receive benefits from LIHEAP may see increased SNAP benefits, no matter the amount of LIHEAP received, S. 3240 would attempt to limit this relationship. Similarly the House Agriculture Committee chairman's mark, released on July 5, 2012, proposes the same change.<sup>1</sup> The House Committee on Agriculture has scheduled a mark-up for July 11, 2012.

Because SNAP benefits are 100% federally funded and because SNAP is an open-ended entitlement, policy changes to benefits or eligibility can generate substantial changes in spending. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that the policy change in S. 3240, addressing the treatment of LIHEAP in determining SNAP benefits, would garner \$4.5 billion in savings over 10 years, and that the savings would come from reductions in benefits for 500,000 households.<sup>2</sup> This policy constitutes approximately 98% of the reductions in spending in the nutrition title of S. 3240 as passed by the Senate.<sup>3</sup>

This Senate-passed policy comes at a time when 2012 farm bill development has focused on deficit reduction as well as agricultural program reforms.<sup>4</sup> Supporters of this Senate-proposed farm bill policy frame it as a tightening of SNAP, ensuring that LIHEAP is treated uniformly and according to congressional intent. Detractors argue that by ending the so-called "Heat and Eat" practice, it reduces benefits for those in need.

In addition to the significance of this provision for S. 3240's nutrition title cost estimate, the current law policy is complex and it can be difficult to untangle how the farm bill change would work and what states and households may be affected. This report provides current law background on the interaction between SNAP and LIHEAP, an explanation of proposed changes, and the potential impact of this change on households and administration of SNAP. This report first begins with the background topics and terminology that contribute to the state of current law: a brief overview of benefit calculation, LIHEAP's role in SNAP deductions and benefit calculation, background on LIHEAP, and the practice of so-called "Heat and Eat." Next, it explains how Section 4002 of S. 3240 would change current law. Finally, the report discusses

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<sup>1</sup> Section 4005 of language posted on Committee website July 5, 2012, <http://agriculture.house.gov/pdf/legislation/FARRMDiscussionDraft.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Congressional Budget Office, *Cost Estimate: S. 3240 Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2012*, May 24, 2012, <http://cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/s3240.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Congressional Budget Office, *Cost Estimate: S. 3240 Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2012 As Passed by the United States Senate on June 21, 2012*, July 6, 2012, <http://cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/s3240Passed.pdf>. For S. 3240's nutrition title, which also includes provisions estimated to increase direct spending, CBO estimates a net cost savings of \$4.0 billion over 10 years.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, "Chairwoman Stabenow, Ranking Member Roberts Highlight Reforms of Farm Bill, Call for Swift Senate Passage," press release, June 6, 2012, <http://www.ag.senate.gov/newsroom/press/release/chairwoman-stabenow-ranking-member-roberts-highlight-reforms-of-farm-bill-call-for-swift-senate-passage>.

how those changes could affect SNAP households and states' administration, but also acknowledges the ways in which CRS is limited in gauging the policy's true impact.<sup>5</sup>

For further information on the farm bill and SNAP in general, please see

- CRS Report R42552, *The Senate-Passed 2012 Farm Bill (S. 3240): A Comparison with Current Law*
- CRS Report R42353, *Domestic Food Assistance: Summary of Programs*
- CRS Report R42505, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): A Primer on Eligibility and Benefits*
- CRS Report R42357, *Previewing the Next Farm Bill*
- CRS Report R42442, *Possible Extension or Expiration of the 2008 Farm Bill*

## Current Law and Background

### Brief Overview of SNAP Benefit Calculation<sup>6</sup>

SNAP benefits are a function of a household's size, its net (counted) monthly income, and inflation-indexed maximum monthly benefit levels (in some cases, adjusted for geographic location). An eligible household's net income is determined (i.e., certain deductions are subtracted from gross income), its maximum benefit level is established, and a benefit is calculated by subtracting its expected contribution (by law, 30% of its net income) from its maximum allotment. This equation is illustrated in **Figure 1**. Thus, in most states, a three-person household with \$400 in counted net income (after deductions) would receive a monthly allotment of \$406 in FY2012 (i.e., the 2012 maximum three-person benefit in the 48 states or DC,<sup>7</sup> \$526, less 30% of the household's net income, \$120). A three-person household with no counted income would receive the maximum allotment.

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<sup>5</sup> Note that the territories Guam and Virgin Islands also operate SNAP. This report consistently uses terms like "states" and "state agencies" with the assumption that such phrases include Guam and Virgin Islands in the context of SNAP.

<sup>6</sup> See CRS Report R42505, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): A Primer on Eligibility and Benefits*, by Randy Alison Aussenberg, for greater discussion of these and other basic SNAP concepts.

<sup>7</sup> The basis for calculating the maximum benefit, the thrifty food plan (and its adjustment for inflation), is slightly different for Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, and the Virgin Islands, which means that the maximum benefit in these jurisdictions is not \$526 for a family of three ([http://www.fns.usda.gov/SNAP/government/FY12\\_Allot\\_Deduct\\_AKHIGUVI.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/SNAP/government/FY12_Allot_Deduct_AKHIGUVI.htm)).

**Figure 1. Calculating the Monthly Benefit for a Hypothetical Household in FY2012**

This Illustration Depicts a Three-Person Household in the 48 States with Net Income of \$400

	<b>Maximum Monthly Benefit (\$526)</b>
-	<b>30% of Net Monthly Income</b> <b>(.30 x \$400 = \$120)</b>
<hr/>	
	<b>SNAP Monthly Benefit (\$406)</b>

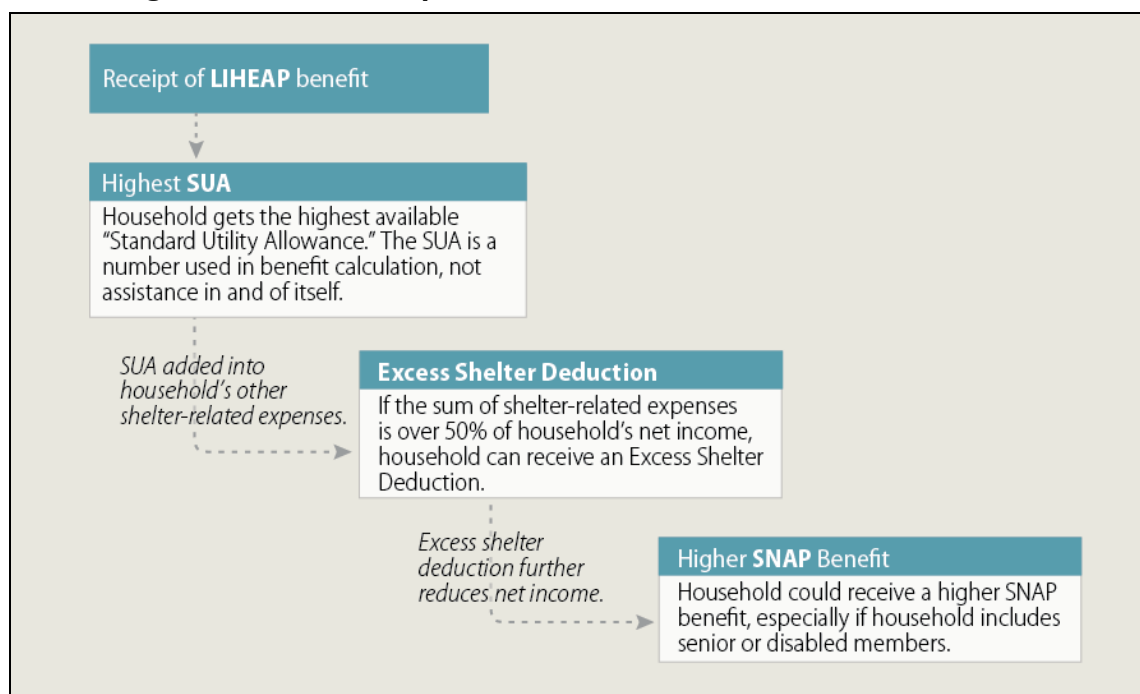
Source: Figure generated by CRS, based on benefit calculation rules.

**LIHEAP’s Role in SNAP Deductions and Benefit Calculation**

Under current law, if a SNAP household receives a LIHEAP payment, then that household may receive a higher SNAP benefit than if the household had not received LIHEAP.<sup>8</sup>

**Figure 2** depicts an overview of LIHEAP’s role in the SNAP benefit calculation. The discussion after **Figure 2** elaborates on the definitions of various deductions used in calculating SNAP benefits, potentially including LIHEAP receipt, and how they interact in the benefit calculation process.

<sup>8</sup> For more information about LIHEAP, see CRS Report RL31865, *The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP): Program and Funding*, by Libby Perl.

**Figure 2. LIHEAP's Impact in the SNAP Benefit Calculation Process**

**Source:** Figure generated by CRS, based on SNAP law.

**Notes:** This figure focuses on the excess shelter deduction, which is conducted after the deduction of other non-shelter deductible expenses such as the standard deduction, dependent care, and earned income.

As shown earlier in **Figure 1**, the amount of SNAP benefits that an eligible household receives is based, in part, on the maximum benefit and also in part on the household's net income. The SNAP agency computes net monthly income by subtracting certain "deductions" from a household's basic (or gross) monthly income. This calculation is based on the recognition that not all of a household's income is available for food purchases. Thus, a standard portion of income, plus amounts representing costs such as work expenses or high non-food living expenses, is deducted from the gross income.

For households *without* an elderly or disabled member, net monthly income equals gross monthly income minus the following deductions,<sup>9</sup> if applicable:

- **Standard deduction:** A "standard" monthly deduction that varies by household size and is indexed for inflation. Every applicant household gets this deduction.
- **Earned income deduction:** 20% of any earned income, in recognition of taxes and work expenses.
- **Child support deduction:** Any amounts paid out as legally obligated child support.

<sup>9</sup> Tables that list the FY2012 amounts of the standard deduction (and other deduction amounts set in the Food and Nutrition Act) can be found in CRS Report R42505, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): A Primer on Eligibility and Benefits*, by Randy Alison Aussenberg.

- **Dependent care deduction:** Out-of-pocket dependent care expenses, when related to work or training.<sup>10</sup>
- **Excess shelter deduction:** The amount of shelter expenses (including utility costs, which states may standardize with a “standard utility allowance” [SUA] calculation) that exceed 50% of net income after all other deductions. This deduction is *capped* for households that do not contain an elderly or disabled member.
  - **Note:** Households that receive LIHEAP may automatically qualify for a higher SUA, no matter the amount of LIHEAP received.

For households *with* an elderly or disabled member, net monthly income equals gross monthly income minus:

- The same **standard, child support, earned income, and dependent care** deductions noted above;
- an *uncapped excess shelter deduction*, to the extent such expenses exceed 50% of counted income after all other deductions; and
- any out-of-pocket medical expenses (other than those for special diets) that are incurred by an elderly or disabled household member, to the extent they exceed a threshold of \$35 a month.

Key points for understanding SNAP’s current LIHEAP policy and its impact are

- A standard utility allowance (SUA) is not something tangible and is a number that states use in place of gathering all of an applicant’s utility cost and usage information. The methodology and the amounts of an SUA vary by state, and many states have several different utility allowances based upon whether a household incurs heating/cooling costs or not. An SUA often “tips the scale” toward enabling an applicant household to qualify for an excess shelter deduction.
- Households with elderly or disabled members have no limit on the amount of their excess shelter deduction, whereas those without an elderly or disabled member have a cap (that adjusts for inflation) on their excess shelter expenses.

## Background on LIHEAP

LIHEAP is a block grant program under which the federal government gives annual grants to states, tribes, and territories (collectively referred to in this report as “states”) to operate home energy assistance programs for low-income households.<sup>11</sup> States may use funds to help eligible households pay for heating and cooling costs, for crisis assistance, and to weatherize their homes.<sup>12</sup> Both renters and homeowners are eligible for LIHEAP.<sup>13</sup> Federal LIHEAP requirements

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<sup>10</sup> Limits on SNAP deductions for dependent care were lifted under the 2008 farm bill (P.L. 110-246).

<sup>11</sup> LIHEAP is codified at 42 U.S.C. §§8621-8630.

<sup>12</sup> 42 U.S.C. §8624(b)(1).

<sup>13</sup> 42 U.S.C. §8624(b)(8).



are minimal and leave most important program decisions to the states, including eligibility guidelines, types of assistance provided, and benefit levels.<sup>14</sup>

- **Regarding eligibility**, states may set maximum LIHEAP eligibility for households up to 150% of the federal poverty income guidelines (or, if greater, 60% of the state median income), but they may not go below 110% of the poverty guidelines.<sup>15</sup> States may also choose to make eligible for LIHEAP assistance any household of which at least one member is a recipient of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), *benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)*, or certain needs-tested veterans' programs.<sup>16</sup>
- **In terms of benefits**, states decide the types of assistance that households receive and the amount. For example, while all states provide heating assistance, only a portion provide assistance for cooling. The amount of benefits also varies; in FY2008, the most recent year for which information is available from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the average LIHEAP benefit for heating assistance was \$293, with a range of \$73 to \$1,172.<sup>17</sup>

Unlike SNAP, LIHEAP is not an entitlement, and funding is not sufficient to assist every household that is eligible for the program. In FY2009, 7.4 million households received heating and/or winter crisis assistance and 900,000 received cooling assistance.<sup>18</sup> The number of households assisted may now be lower. FY2009 was a year in which states received a total of \$5.1 billion for LIHEAP, compared to \$4.7 billion in FY2011 and about \$3.5 billion in FY2012.

## What Is “Heat and Eat”?

“Heat and Eat” is a phrase that the low-income and hunger advocacy community has used to describe state and program policies that leverage nominal (as low as \$1) LIHEAP payments into an increase in households' SNAP benefits that is larger than the initial LIHEAP payment.<sup>19</sup> Certain states have implemented or are scheduled to implement this policy. In June 2012, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (USDA-FNS) surveyed states and determined that 16 states (including the District of Columbia) implement or will soon implement “Heat and Eat.”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> The LIHEAP Clearinghouse, a website administered by the National Center for Appropriate Technology through a contract with the Department of Health and Human Services, contains a good deal of information about how states operate their programs. See <http://www.liheap.ncat.org/>.

<sup>15</sup> 42 U.S.C. §8624(b)(2).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *FY2008 LIHEAP Report to Congress*, September 6, 2011, p. 36, <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/liheap/publications/liheap08rc.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> There is likely some overlap in these numbers, and HHS does not de-duplicate. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, *LIHEAP Home Energy Notebook for Fiscal Year 2009*, September 2011, pp. 30-31.

<sup>19</sup> Food Research and Action Center, *Heat and Eat: Using Federal Nutrition Programs to Soften Low-Income Households' Food/Fuel Dilemma*, March 2009, [http://frac.org/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/heat\\_and\\_eat09.pdf](http://frac.org/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/heat_and_eat09.pdf). See also, “SNAP cuts = Cuts in Meals for Americans Struggling to Heat and Eat,” [http://frac.org/pdf/snap\\_cuts\\_and\\_heat\\_and\\_eat.pdf](http://frac.org/pdf/snap_cuts_and_heat_and_eat.pdf).

<sup>20</sup> California (which passed a law requiring implementation by October 2013), Connecticut, Delaware (although no (continued...))

Part of the rationale for the nominal LIHEAP benefits (versus more substantive benefits) is that LIHEAP is not an entitlement, and states may not be able to assist every household that is eligible for the program, particularly because the statute requires that states prioritize “households with the highest home energy costs or needs in relation to household income.”<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, SNAP is open-ended and the benefits are financed 100% by the federal government, so “Heat and Eat” policies are a net gain for states in times of limited state and LIHEAP resources.

Criticism for this practice arises, as some say that it broadens the connection between SNAP and LIHEAP beyond congressional intent.<sup>22</sup> When state law makes all SNAP participants eligible for LIHEAP, such participants receive LIHEAP assistance legally, but the logical result is that some households are receiving energy assistance (and therefore the potentially higher levels of nutrition assistance that may go with it) who might not otherwise have the highest energy need in the state.

### **Are Recipients of These Nominal Payments Ineligible for LIHEAP?**

States implementing a so-called “Heat and Eat” policy may only provide LIHEAP to households that are eligible for the program under the LIHEAP statute, either through income eligibility or eligibility based on enrollment in another means-tested program. In other words, there are no separate eligibility criteria for recipients of nominal LIHEAP benefits. Therefore, a household would not receive LIHEAP benefits unless they are eligible for the program. In states that use receipt of SNAP to determine eligibility,<sup>23</sup> SNAP participants are automatically eligible for LIHEAP. Otherwise, households would have to meet LIHEAP income eligibility requirements.

## **How Would the Senate’s 2012 Farm Bill Change Current Law?**

The Senate bill’s policy would require that LIHEAP payments be in amounts larger than \$10 in order to trigger a standard utility allowance in the SNAP benefit calculation process. This provision would not take effect until October 1, 2013 (one year later than most other aspects of Title IV of the bill). Section 4002 also includes a provision that would give states the option to protect affected households from a change in benefits due to this policy for as long as 180 days.

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(...continued)

nominal payment has been issued in FY2012), District of Columbia, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana (issues a \$50 payment every five years to those living in subsidized housing with rent included), New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin.

<sup>21</sup> 42 U.S.C. §8624(b)(2).

<sup>22</sup> Sen. Stabenow, “Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act,” Senate debate, *Congressional Record*, June 19, 2012, p. S4278 (“In a handful of States, they have found a way to increase the SNAP benefits for people in their States by sending \$1 checks in heating assistance to everyone who gets food assistance. Now, it is important to consider what a family’s heating bill is when determining how much help they need, which is why the two programs are linked. But sending out \$1 checks to everyone is not the intent of Congress. For the small number of States that are doing that, it is undermining the integrity of the program, in my judgment. I appreciate we have turned down those amendments that would, in fact, change this structure and lower benefits. But this is about accountability and integrity within the program, and I must oppose the amendment [striking Section 4002].”). Sen. Roberts, “Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act,” Senate debate, *Congressional Record*, June 19, 2012, p. S4278 (“... closing the LIHEAP loophole”).

<sup>23</sup> See <http://liheap.ncat.org/tables/FY2012/subsidize.htm>.

The House Agriculture Committee Chairman's mark released on July 5, in advance of the scheduled July 11 markup, mirrors the S. 3240 language.<sup>24</sup>

Section 4002 of S. 3240 was included in the bill that passed the Senate (64-35) on June 20, 2012. On June 19, 2012, during floor consideration, Section 4002 survived a proposal to strike this section, when S.Amdt. 2156 was voted down (33-66). This policy had also been included in the version of the farm bill voted out of the Senate Agriculture Committee on April 26, 2012.<sup>25</sup>

## What May Be the Impact of the Senate-Passed Farm Bill's Change to the Treatment of LIHEAP in the Calculation of SNAP Benefits?

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that the change in S. 3240 would reduce direct spending for SNAP by \$1.74 billion over 5 years and \$4.49 billion over 10 years.<sup>26</sup> CBO has also estimated that the change would reduce nearly 500,000 households' SNAP benefits by an average of \$90 per household.<sup>27</sup>

### Impact on Households

This policy change could result in a reduction of benefits for some households that either currently receive the excess shelter deduction or receive a *higher* excess shelter deduction due to LIHEAP payments that are \$10 or lower. However, under this proposed change, some households might still qualify for the standard utility allowance, and then the excess shelter deduction, by documenting their utility costs in other ways. Applicants would have to be aware of the need to present utility bills or other documentation.

Error! Reference source not found. shows a state-by-state estimate of the percentage of FY2010 SNAP households that received their heating and cooling SUA due to receipt of LIHEAP. This table does not reflect the *amount* of LIHEAP that these households received because collected data do not include this information. If a state adopted a "Heat and Eat" policy after FY2010, that impact will not be reflected in this table. It is expected that the Senate-passed farm bill would most affect households in the so-called "Heat and Eat" states (see footnote 20), but it should be said that the states ultimately affected would also depend upon state choices (states might choose to transmit \$11 payments, for instance) as well as the details of USDA-FNS implementation of the policy. In addition, these data do not capture the extent to which households would be able to provide alternative utility cost documentation and therefore have their benefit amounts unchanged.

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<sup>24</sup> Section 4005 of language posted on Committee website July 5, 2012, <http://agriculture.house.gov/pdf/legislation/FARRMDiscussionDraft.pdf>.

<sup>25</sup> See <http://www.ag.senate.gov/issues/farm-bill>.

<sup>26</sup> Congressional Budget Office, *Cost Estimate: S. 3240 Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2012*, May 24, 2012, <http://cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/s3240.pdf>.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, at 8.

Section 4002 of S. 3240 gives states the option for “grandfathering” those households that would be affected for as long as 180 days after October 1, 2013 (the provision’s effective date). This would appear to possibly protect those who would experience a reduction in benefits due to this change of LIHEAP treatment. It is anticipated that after this period, the household would then experience the reduction.

## Impact on Program Administration

Modifying the treatment of LIHEAP in SNAP would appear to create changes in the program application process, but it is difficult to know just what the results would be. The so-called “Heat and Eat” states would appear to no longer have any reason to issue LIHEAP payments below \$10 to SNAP participants, since such sums would neither substantially assist with utility costs nor generate larger SNAP benefits. In addition, compared to a \$1 payment, a payment greater than \$10 to multiple recipients could strain state LIHEAP budgets. Under this provision, state agencies, applicants, and participants would seem to have an added burden of determining (and documenting) all utility costs for the households that had previously received nominal LIHEAP payments; this can be more complicated where utility costs are included in rent. Further, advocates contend that presenting LIHEAP documentation is an administrative simplification that makes sure that eligible households are getting all of the deductions—or at least credit for all the deductions—that such households are due, especially in “Heat and Eat” states where the LIHEAP payment may be communicated to SNAP computer systems through a data-matching process.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Food Research and Action Center, *Heat and Eat: Using Federal Nutrition Programs to Soften Low-Income Households’ Food/Fuel Dilemma*, March 2009, [http://frac.org/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/heat\\_and\\_eat09.pdf](http://frac.org/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/heat_and_eat09.pdf), p. 11 (“even if this [heating and cooling cost] information is reported, advocates report many SNAP/Food Stamp workers are too busy to record the information in the case record. By providing this special LIHEAP-funded benefit through an automated data exchange and direct mailing, states like Massachusetts have been able to apply the heating/cooling SUA to increase the SNAP/Food Stamp benefit for thousands of needy households.”).

**Table I. SNAP Households with SUAs Due to LIHEAP Benefits, FY2010**

According to SNAP Quality Control Data Sample

State	# Households with SUA Due to LIHEAP	% of State's SNAP Households	State	# Households with SUA Due to LIHEAP	% of State's SNAP Households
Alabama	0	0.0%	Nebraska	28,295	40.8%
Alaska	6,962	23.0%	Nevada	13,239	10.6%
Arizona	0	0.0%	New Hampshire	32,996	67.6%
Arkansas	623	0.3%	New Jersey	260,515	86.9%
California	55,281	4.0%	New Mexico	43,250	29.3%
Colorado	52,370	29.8%	New York	798,117	55.9%
Connecticut	72,647	41.5%	North Carolina	177,485	29.4%
Delaware	0	0.0%	North Dakota	10,499	39.2%
District of Columbia	4,841	7.5%	Ohio	148,572	20.0%
Florida	0	0.0%	Oklahoma	76,057	30.8%
Georgia	1,520	0.2%	Oregon	69,947	19.0%
Hawaii	138	0.2%	Pennsylvania	308,704	42.0%
Idaho	20,615	26.7%	Rhode Island	41,976	58.2%
Illinois	101,362	13.2%	South Carolina	260	0.1%
Indiana	30,186	8.8%	South Dakota	15,104	37.9%
Iowa	20,477	13.3%	Tennessee	7,785	1.4%
Kansas	34,505	28.6%	Texas	4,350	0.3%
Kentucky	98,051	28.3%	Utah	20,958	21.5%
Louisiana	1,893	0.5%	Vermont	24,307	58.3%
Maine	47,797	42.1%	Virginia	103,616	29.3%
Maryland	41,866	16.2%	Washington	337,662	71.8%
Massachusetts	171,454	42.9%	West Virginia	40,674	27.0%
Michigan	257,607	30.0%	Wisconsin	313,025	99.3%
Minnesota	25,032	12.0%	Wyoming	4,422	31.2%
Mississippi	610	0.2%	Guam	0	0.0%
Missouri	71,670	17.9%	Virgin Islands	0	0.0%
Montana	10,547	21.1%	<b>ALL STATES TOTAL</b>	<b>4,009,872</b>	<b>21.8%</b>

**Source:** SNAP Quality Control Data from FY2010. Data analysis conducted by Gene Falk, CRS Specialist in Social Policy.

**Notes:** Because these data are from FY2010, they will not reflect the impact from state so-called "Heat and Eat" policies implemented in subsequent fiscal years. If LIHEAP benefits were to no longer qualify households for a standard utility allowance, some portion of these households would be able to document utility costs by another means that would qualify them for the SUA.

## Has This Change Been Included in Other 112<sup>th</sup> Congress Legislative Proposals?

The Agriculture Reconciliation Act (included in the House-passed Sequester Replacement Reconciliation Act, H.R. 5652) would end a benefit calculation relationship between LIHEAP and SNAP entirely. Presentation of LIHEAP documentation during the SNAP application process would not trigger the inclusion of a Standard Utility Allowance in the benefit calculation process under this legislation. During floor consideration of S. 3240, the Senate-passed farm bill, several amendments<sup>29</sup> were introduced that mirror the House's H.R. 5652 language, but none of those received votes during the floor consideration. This is a broader change than the S. 3240 change; it would affect more households, and CBO estimated it to save close to \$14 billion over 10 years.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> S.Amdt. 2173; S.Amdt. 2376; S.Amdt. 2377.

<sup>30</sup> Congressional Budget Office, *Cost Estimate: Agriculture Reconciliation Act*, April 23, 2012, <http://cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/HouseAgricultureReconciliation.pdf>.