

The Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress

SNAP to Health:

A Fresh Approach to Strengthening Nutrition in the
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

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Capitol Hill Briefing

Speaker Biographies



Susan J. Blumenthal, M.D., M.P.A.

Conference Chair
Project Director, SNAP to Health Initiative
Director, Health and Medicine Program
Center for the Study of the Presidency and
Congress
Former U.S. Assistant Surgeon General

Rear Admiral Susan J. Blumenthal, M.D., M.P.A. (ret.) serves as the Director of the Health and Medicine Program at the Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress (CSPC) in Washington D.C., where she provides strategic direction and medical leadership. She is also a Clinical Professor at Georgetown and Tufts Schools of Medicine. For more than 20 years in the Administrations of four Presidents, Dr. Blumenthal served as a leading U.S. government health expert and spokesperson in positions including Assistant Surgeon General of the United States, the first Deputy Assistant Secretary for Women's Health, and Senior Global and e-Health Advisor in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). She was also a White House Advisor on health issues and the Medical Advisor to the Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Prior to these positions, Dr. Blumenthal served as Chief of the Behavioral Medicine and Basic Prevention Research Branch at the National Institute of Mental Health and as Chair of the Health and Behavior Coordinating Committee at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). She has been a leader in bringing major public health issues including women's health, obesity, disease and violence prevention, global health, HIV/AIDS, and mental illness to increased public and scientific attention. Dr. Blumenthal was also a pioneer in applying information technology to health establishing several award-winning websites. In the 1980s, Dr. Blumenthal was a major force in exposing the inequities in women's health and in the 1990s, as the country's first Deputy Assistant Secretary for Women's Health, coordinated a \$4 billion budget across HHS agencies as well as established new initiatives to move women's health issues to the forefront of our nation's healthcare agenda. Dr. Blumenthal is the Public Health Editor of the *Huffington Post*. She also served as the health columnist for *US News and World Report* and as Medical Director and Host for an award-winning television series on health. Dr. Blumenthal has received numerous awards including honorary doctorates and has been decorated with the highest medals of the U.S. Public Health Service for her significant contributions to improving health in the U.S. and internationally. She was named the 2009 Health Leader of the Year by the Commissioned Officers Association and as a 2010 Rock Star of Science.



Gillian Barclay, D.D.S., Dr.P.H.
Vice President, Programs
Aetna Foundation

Dr. Gillian Barclay is Vice President, Programs, of the Aetna Foundation. In her role, she leads the development, execution and evaluation of the foundation's national grant programs and cultivates new projects within its three focus areas: reducing obesity, improving health care equity, and promoting integrated health care. Prior to joining the Aetna Foundation, Dr. Barclay was an Advisor for the Regional Office of the World Health Organization in the Office of Caribbean Program Coordination. There, she managed a portfolio of health initiatives in the region that focused special attention on the impact of gender, human rights, integrated health systems, and essential public health functions on people's access to quality health care. Previously, she was the Evaluation Manager, Health Programs for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, responsible for assessing the foundation's health initiatives in the areas of reducing health disparities, community and school-based health care, and oral health, among others. Dr. Barclay has taught at the Harvard School of Public Health and Hunter College at the City University of New York. She has published in peer-reviewed health literature and has been a frequent presenter at health conferences in America and around the world.



The Honorable Saxby Chambliss, J.D.
U.S. Senate - Georgia

Senator Saxby Chambliss, named by Georgia Trend Magazine as one of the most influential Georgians, is a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee; the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry; the Senate Rules Committee; the Senate Special Committee on Aging; and presently serves as the Vice Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Throughout his career, he has been recognized for his leadership and work on agriculture, defense, and national security issues. During the 109th Congress, Senator Chambliss served as Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, and is the only senator since 1947 to have chaired a full standing Senate committee after serving in the chamber for just two years. He was the ranking member of the Agriculture Committee during the 110th and 111th Congresses. Senator Chambliss was first elected to Congress to represent Georgia's 8th District in 1994. During his four terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, Chambliss was instrumental in drafting two farm bills and reforming the federal crop insurance program. He is the recipient of numerous honors for his work. In 2008, Senator Chambliss was presented with the National Legislative Advocacy Award by the Naval Reserve Association for leading the effort to reduce the age at which members of the National Guard and Reserve can receive retirement pay. He is also the recipient of the National Guard Association's Harry S. Truman Award, the organization's highest honor bestowed on civilian and military leaders who demonstrate continued contributions to national defense and security. Senator Chambliss is a past recipient of the Air Force Association's W. Stuart Symington Award, the group's top civilian honor for outstanding contributions in the field of national security, and was awarded the Reserve Officers Association's Minuteman of the Year Award in 2005.

SNAP to Health Speaker Biographies



Emily Costa
FoodSource Hotline Counselor
Project Bread

Emily Costa has been a member of Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline since 2008, helping clients in both English and Portuguese. The Hotline takes 45,000 calls a year from people in Massachusetts who are hungry and are seeking food assistance. Through a translation service, the Hotline can take confidential calls in real time in 160 languages. Ms. Costa assists clients over the phone in applying for SNAP benefits through the state's Virtual Gateway Application Assistance program and helps them navigate the entire application process. She also directs clients to emergency food resources and low-cost food programs in their neighborhood, often making them aware of other programs that might help, like fuel assistance. During her time at Project Bread she has seen and heard first-hand the effects of the economic downturn on the lives of thousands of individuals and families across the state. Before joining Project Bread, Ms. Costa worked in the customer service and nonprofit sectors. She has a B.A. in Sociology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and is working on her M.A. in counseling from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.



The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, M.A.
U.S. House of Representatives —Conn.

Rosa DeLauro has served as the U.S. Congresswoman from Connecticut's Third District since 1991 and serves in the Democratic Leadership as Co-Chair of the Steering and Policy Committee. She is the ranking member on the powerful Labor, Health, Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee, where she oversees our country's investments in education, health, and employment. Congresswoman DeLauro also serves on the Subcommittee responsible for FDA and agriculture, where she oversees drug and food safety as well as federal food assistance programs. As the ranking member dealing with appropriations for Labor, Health, Human Services, and Education, Rep. DeLauro is determined to increase support for education and innovation, to fully implement the new health care reform law, to protect the rights of employees and unions, and raise living standards. Additionally, Congresswoman DeLauro has led the fight in Congress to achieve full pay equity for women and to ensure that all employees have access to paid sick days. She is a champion of veteran's issues. Prior to her election to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1990, Rep. DeLauro served as the first Executive Director of EMILY'S List and as the Executive Director of Countdown '87.



Susan Foerster, M.P.H., R.D.
Nutritionist

Susan Foerster's leadership experience includes anti-poverty programs in Boston, statewide chronic disease prevention in California, and co-founding the *California 5 a Day Campaign*, forerunner of today's National Fruit and Vegetable Program, a public/private partnership. She established the *Network for a Healthy California* which is the largest among state social marketing nutrition networks in the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The *Network* partners with the SNAP state agency and the University of California, Davis-CalFresh Nutrition Education Program to increase fruits and vegetables consumption, physical activity, and food security and help prevent obesity. The *Network* conducts statewide nutrition education, marketing, and outreach programs to California's 7 million low-income parents and children with household earnings below 185% of the federal poverty line. Delivery channels include mass communications, local health departments, schools, food banks, retail food stores, community clinics, faith organizations, worksites, other organizations, and 11 Regional Networks. Since establishment of the Network in 1997, fruit and vegetable consumption has risen significantly among SNAP participants and other low-income adults in California. Ms. Foerster serves with a number of national leadership organizations. She has published many articles including in the June 2011 supplement to the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* which focuses on SNAP-Ed. Ms. Foerster received a B.S. and an M.P.H. from the University of California, Berkeley.

SNAP to Health Speaker Biographies



Maria Infante
Manager of Community Initiatives
Project Bread

Maria Infante has worked as Project Bread's Manager of Community Initiatives since 2005 with a focus on hunger prevention and healthy food access in Massachusetts. She supervises a team of outreach workers who provide SNAP outreach and application assistance. A fluent Spanish-speaker, she directs several Latino as well as elder population SNAP outreach projects throughout the state. During her time at Project Bread, Ms. Infante has led projects promoting the connection between health and adequate nutrition for children. Ms. Infante is an active member of the Jericho Road Cultural Inclusion Steering Committee and a former board member of the House of Hope Board of Directors. Before joining Project Bread, Ms. Infante worked as a state certified legal interpreter for Massachusetts's District Court Department, Criminal Division. Ms. Infante is currently pursuing an M.S.A. in International Development through Andrews University. She earned a B.A. from Wheaton College in Massachusetts.



Susan Kansagra, M.D., M.B.A.
Assistant Commissioner, Chronic Disease
Prevention and Tobacco Control
New York City Department of Health
and Mental Hygiene

Dr. Susan Kansagra is Assistant Commissioner for Chronic Disease Prevention and Tobacco Control at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. In this capacity, she oversees the Department's obesity-related programs and policies including physical activity, nutrition, and built environment programs. She also oversees other chronic disease prevention initiatives including the National Salt Reduction Initiative and the Department's tobacco control agenda, which includes legislation, media, and cessation activities that have resulted in a decline in smoking prevalence by 35% since 2002. Dr. Kansagra has contributed to numerous other public health initiatives while at the NYC Department of Health, including implementation of one of the nation's largest H1N1 vaccination efforts. She is also a member of the Governor's Tobacco Use Advisory Board. Dr. Kansagra completed her Internal Medicine training at Massachusetts General Hospital and received her medical and business degrees from Duke University.



David Ludwig, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor of Nutrition,
Harvard School of Public Health
Professor of Pediatrics,
Harvard Medical School
Director, Optimal Weight for Life
(OWL) Program
Director, New Balance Foundation
Obesity Prevention Center
Boston Children's Hospital

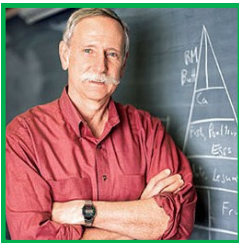
Dr. David Ludwig is a practicing pediatrician and researcher at the Children's Hospital in Boston. He is also Professor of Nutrition at Harvard School of Public Health and Professor of Pediatrics at the Harvard Medical School. At Boston Children's Hospital, Dr. Ludwig is the Founding Director of the Optimal Weight for Life (OWL) Program, a multidisciplinary, state-of-the-art clinic for the treatment of overweight children and their families. He is also the Director of the New Balance Foundation Obesity Prevention Center that integrates research, clinic care, education, and community outreach. Dr. Ludwig serves as Associate Director of the hospital's Clinical and Translational Studies Unit. His research focuses on the effects of diet on hormones, metabolism, and body weight. In particular, he has been developing a novel "low glycemic" diet (i.e., one that decreases the surge in blood sugar after meals) for the treatment of obesity and prevention of type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Dr. Ludwig has published over 100 scientific articles and has been continuously funded by the NIH since 1993. Described as an obesity warrior by *Time Magazine*, Dr. Ludwig has fought for fundamental policy changes to restrict food advertising directed at young children, improve quality of school nutrition programs and increase insurance reimbursement for obesity prevention and treatment programs. He is a Fellow of The Obesity Society and recipient of the E.V. McCollum Award (2008) of the American Society for Nutrition. Dr. Ludwig is the author of *Ending the Food Fight: Guide Your Child to a Healthy Weight in a Fast Food/Fake Food World*.

SNAP to Health Speaker Biographies



Marion Nestle, Ph.D., M.P.H.
Paulette Goddard Professor
and Former Chair,
Department of Nutrition
New York University

Dr. Marion Nestle is the Paulette Goddard Professor and Former Chair of the Department of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health at New York University. She is also Professor of Sociology at New York University. Her research focuses on how science and society influence dietary advice and practice. Dr. Nestle has served as Associate Dean of the University of California-San Francisco School of Medicine and as the senior nutrition policy advisor in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She was also the Managing Editor of the 1988 Surgeon General's Report on Nutrition and Health. Her widely acclaimed, award-winning books include *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health*, *Safe Food: The Politics of Food Safety*, *What to Eat*, and most recently, *Why Calories Count: From Science to Politics*, which she co-authored with Malden Nesheim. Dr. Nestle writes a monthly column for the *San Francisco Chronicle* and blogs regularly at www.foodpolitics.com and for *The Atlantic*. Her degrees include a Ph.D. in molecular biology and an M.P.H. in public health nutrition, both from the University of California, Berkeley.



Walter Willett, M.D., Dr.P.H.
Chairman and Fredrick John Stare
Professor of Epidemiology and Nutrition,
Department of Nutrition
Harvard School of Public Health
Professor of Medicine,
Harvard School of Medicine

Dr. Walter Willett is Chair of the Department of Nutrition and the Fredrick John Stare Professor of Epidemiology and Nutrition at Harvard School of Public Health. He is also Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Willett has focused much of his work over the last 25 years on the development of methods, using both questionnaire and biochemical approaches, to study the effects of diet on the occurrence of major chronic diseases. He has applied these methods starting in 1980 in the Nurses' Health Studies I and II and the Health Professionals Follow-up Study. Together, these cohorts (that include nearly 300,000 men and women with repeated dietary assessments) are providing the most detailed information on the long-term health consequences of food choices. Dr. Willett has published over 1,100 articles, primarily on lifestyle risk factors for heart disease and cancer, and has written the textbook, *Nutritional Epidemiology*, published by Oxford University Press. He also has authored three books for the general public, *Eat, Drink and Be Healthy: The Harvard Medical School Guide to Healthy Eating*, which has appeared on most major bestseller lists, *Eat, Drink, and Weigh Less*, co-authored with Mollie Katzen, and most recently, *The Fertility Diet*, co-authored with Jorge Chavarro and Pat Skerrett. Dr. Willett is the most cited nutritionist internationally, and is among the five most cited persons in all fields of clinical science. He is a member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences and the recipient of many national and international awards for his research.



The Honorable Ron Wyden, J.D.
U.S. Senate - Oregon

Ron Wyden, the senior U.S. Senator from Oregon, has provided dedicated leadership in the U.S. Senate since 1996. He has been a champion of the environment, clean energy, and health care reform. Senator Wyden serves on the Committees on Finance, Budget, Aging, Intelligence, and Energy and Natural Resources. He chairs the Senate Finance Subcommittee on International Trade, Customs and Global Competitiveness and the Senate Energy Subcommittee on Public Land and Forests. Committed to bipartisan solutions, Senator Wyden has authored more than 150 bipartisan bills and assembled unprecedented bipartisan coalitions on issues such as health care, infrastructure and tax reform. He served as the Director of Oregon Legal Services for the Elderly from 1977 to 1979 and was a member of the Oregon State Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators during that same period. He served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1981 until his election to the U.S. Senate in 1996. Senator Wyden is recognized as one of the Senate's foremost health policy thinkers and has received numerous awards and honors for his work.