



As Foreign Aid Flows Amid Shutdown, Obama USDA to Stop Food Stamps

Despite the wildly over-hyped partial “shutdown” of the federal government, U.S. taxpayer dollars [continue flowing to foreign lands](#) and [innumerable other unconstitutional schemes](#) that are arbitrarily deemed “essential.” The Obama administration’s Department of Agriculture (USDA), however, sent a letter to states apparently ordering them to cut off food stamps for Americans by November 1, pending further notice. A welfare program for women, children, and infants known as WIC is also on the chopping block, and some analysts are [forecasting potential disaster](#).



As part of the effort to [extort funds for ObamaCare](#) from the people’s representatives in Congress, the administration has [already been caught deliberately trying to make the “shutdown” feel as “painful” as possible](#) — [closing parks, evicting homeowners, shuttering businesses, harassing veterans, trying to shut down parts of the ocean, and more](#), often at additional expense to taxpayers. Suddenly cutting off funds to the food stamp “Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program” (SNAP) that some 50 million people have come to depend on, though, would take the obscene antics to a new level — especially doing it with no warning.

According to media reports appearing around the country, a letter from USDA “Food and Nutrition Service” (FNS) boss Audrey Rowe to SNAP state agency directors suggests food stamps will be cut off by next month unless Congress agrees to a funding bill that meets all of Obama’s demands. The USDA did not immediately respond to a request for comment from *The New American*. (Update: a spokesman said he would send a comment by morning at the latest, as requested. *TNA* will update the article once the statement is received.) However, state officials confirmed the developments, and the USDA letter to states is now widely available online.

“FNS understands that States are concerned about future operations stemming from the continuing lapse in Federal funding,” explained the document. “According to the information we have received, several States provide next month’s issuance files as early as the 15th of the month. With that in mind, understanding the operational issues and constraints that States face, and in the interest of preserving maximum flexibility, we are directing States to hold their November issuance files and delay transmission to State electronic benefit transfer (EBT) vendors until further notice.”

On the USDA website, which has not been updated in two weeks due to the “shutdown,” an FNS document also explains some of the agency’s plans for dealing with the partial shutdown. “States may make the decision to continue operations (of FNCS) for some period, but they will be doing so at their own risk with the understanding that Federal funds may not be forthcoming,” the document [explained](#).

For food stamps, though, the money runs out in about two weeks unless the “deal” to cave in to



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on October 17, 2013

Obama's demands goes through. "The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) will continue operations and eligible households will still receive monthly benefits for October," noted the document, dated October 1. After that, what happens was not explained, but analysts say the letter might offer the answer.

Separately, the WIC, which provides assistance to poor women and children, is also among the programs apparently set to be cut off unless House Republicans agree to all of Obama's demands. "Should a lapse extend through late October, federal WIC funding may not be sufficient to cover benefits," explains the USDA's "shutdown" plan. According to news reports citing officials, the program is expected to be one of the first to fold unless and until the full federal government — rather than the supposedly "essential" 83 percent currently in operation — is back up and running.

State officials quoted in media accounts confirmed that the two unconstitutional federal welfare schemes providing food to the poor were in trouble. "The biggest programs affected by the shutdown will be food stamps, the Women, Infants and Children feeding program (WIC), the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance program and the school lunch program," [said](#) State Budget Director John Nixon in Michigan, where some 200,000 women and children obtain WIC benefits.

In Utah, Juliette Tennert, chief economist for the Governor's Office of Management and Budget, also [confirmed](#) that the food stamp program "is scheduled to run out at the end of the month" if the shutdown continues. Officials in other states have come to similar conclusions, though it does not appear that food stamp recipients have been notified yet.

In many areas, private charities and citizens are getting ready to step up to the plate, vowing to do what they can to help needy families if and when their food stamps run out. "It is important that Michiganders understand that the Food Banks will stretch their dollars and do whatever is needed to meet the demand that may arise from any loss of our public partners," [explained](#) Kareemah El-Amin, executive director of The Food Bank Council of Michigan.

In other states, though, local food bank operators are warning that they may not be able to deal with the sudden explosion of demand. Idaho Foodbank President Karen Vauk, for example, [said](#) her network "cannot" replace the food stamp program. In Utah, Associate Director Bill Tibbits with the Crossroads Urban Center [said](#): "We can't, there's no way we could deal with it."

Of course, with just two weeks' notice, it will certainly be hard to make up for the shortfall. That has more than a few analysts and commentators concerned about what could happen. A regular contributor to the financial analysis site ZeroHedge who goes by the name Tyler Durden [noted](#) that with "a massive portion" of the American people "now fully reliant on the welfare state for virtually every daily need, it is easy to see cutting off daily bread to tens of millions has a less than happy ending." Citing recent, small-scale food stamp glitches that [resulted in instant chaos](#), he said it "may be the most catalytic event in the history of the U.S. welfare state."

Liberty-minded political activist Kristan Harris, [writing](#) for South Milwaukee Now, echoed increasingly widespread concerns about the potential for turmoil. "Could the SNAP EBT (Food Stamp) disaster that occurred across 17 states last weekend have been a planned drill rather than system failure?" he asked, referring to [recent outages that led to some looting and disorder](#). The piece also criticized the fact that people have not been informed.

"Let's not forget other sensible cuts that could happen for example programs like the Department of



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Homeland Security, The NSA, The TSA, fusion centers, unconstitutional spying programs, cameras on the street corners and armored vehicles for our local colleges are not happening,” Harris added. “I bet all those bills are still being paid. Why can’t we cut there?”

Indeed, under the almost ludicrous justification that showering taxpayer funds on foreign governments is a “national security” issue, the Obama administration’s foreign aid schemes are still going at full speed. Shortly before the shutdown began, State Department spokesperson Jen Psaki [told](#) reporters that “the vast majority of normal functions and operations will continue.”

In addition to “foreign aid,” the food stamp program is just one of an ever-growing number of unconstitutional federal schemes that should eventually be phased out. The U.S. Constitution [provides no authority](#) whatsoever for the federal government to operate wealth-redistribution or welfare schemes — no matter how well-intentioned they may sound. Of course, if state governments wish to operate such programs, there is nothing to prevent them from doing so, constitutionally speaking at least.

However, studies and history consistently show the devastating consequences of creating dependence on government. Private charities are generally far more efficient, compassionate, and frugal in supporting those in need anyway. Americans can and will help their neighbors — especially if food stamps are cut off next month — regardless of what Big Government proponents claim.

Still, threatening to cut off food stamps after deliberately creating a massive class of dependent citizens and attacking the economy from all angles — even as most of the out-of-control federal government continues squandering money on everything from foreign aid to harassing taxpayers — should be recognized for what it is: A cheap ploy to terrorize Americans into submission.

Such programs should eventually be phased out and replaced with private charity, preferably, or state-level initiatives if citizens in those believe government intervention must continue. However, to cut them off completely and without warning in an apparent bid to extort money for ObamaCare merits congressional investigations at the very least. Americans, meanwhile, should prepare themselves to feed and protect their families and fellow citizens in case the need arises suddenly.

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