

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 3, 2024

**Press Contacts:**

[Dylan Stafford](#) (Murray)

[Caty Payette](#) (Heinrich)

## **BILL SUMMARY: Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations Bill**

*Legislation fully funds WIC, maintains vital rental assistance for Americans in rural areas, protects resources farmers and ranchers count on, and protects America's food supply and families' health*

*Bill rejects extreme new partisan riders*

**Washington, D.C.** – The Fiscal Year 2024 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act provides \$26.228 billion in total funding.

**“As Chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, I am focused on delivering for American families, farmers and producers, and rural communities. This bill gets that done, even while we had to make some tough decisions to get there. I am especially proud that we stood firm to fully fund WIC and the other programs that will help put food on the table for America's kids,”** said Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Chair of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee.

**“I said I would move mountains to ensure we fully fund WIC—as Congress has done for decades—and that's what I did. Thanks to Democrats, no mom or kid will be turned away from the nutrition assistance they are eligible for and counting on, and I am so glad we are protecting this vital program for the millions of women and children who depend on it each and every day,”** said Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee. **“In addition to protecting absolutely essential nutrition assistance programs like the new Summer EBT program I fought to establish, this bipartisan bill will help Americans in rural areas keep a roof**

**over their head, strengthen our investments in agricultural research, and support our nation’s farmers and ranchers. This legislation helps ensure the FDA can meet its essential mission to keep our food supply and American consumers safe—and provides new funding so the agency can regulate cosmetics for the first time ever. Critically, the bill does not restrict access to mifepristone or include any new extreme riders.”**

### **Key Points & Highlights**

**Nutrition Assistance:** The bill delivers critical new resources to fully fund WIC and ensure all eligible women, infants, and children can get the nutrition they need, and it protects vital nutrition assistance programs for families across the country within tight budget constraints.

- **WIC:** The bill fully funds the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)—which serves nearly 7 million women and kids nationwide—by providing \$7.03 billion for the program, a \$1.03 billion increase over fiscal year 2023 that meets the administration’s updated request. This increase will ensure that all eligible participants can continue to rely on the essential nutrition assistance and support provided by WIC. The bill also continues full funding for additional fruit and vegetable benefits.
- **SNAP:** The bill fully funds the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to serve an estimated 42 million people per month—and does not include any new restrictions on eligibility.
- **Child Nutrition:** The bill fully funds Child Nutrition Programs—like the School Lunch program, school breakfast program, and Summer EBT program—to ensure schools can continue to serve healthy meals to all eligible children. In 2024, this funding will help serve an estimated 5 billion lunches and 2.6 billion breakfasts to kids across the country.

**Agricultural Research:** The bill provides \$1.79 billion—a \$44 million increase over fiscal year 2023—for the Agricultural Research Service, the Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) premiere in-house research agency.

**Food and Drug Administration (FDA):** The bill provides \$6.72 billion in total funding for the FDA, which includes \$3.52 billion in discretionary funding. The bill provides \$7 million to conduct oversight of cosmetics for the first time ever and \$1.5 million to reduce animal testing through alternative methods. It also includes \$50 million for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act.

**Rental Assistance:** The bill provides \$1.608 billion for rental assistance—an increase of \$120 million over fiscal year 2023—to help ensure Americans living in rural areas have access to safe and affordable housing. The bill also allows USDA to implement a pilot program to decouple rental assistance from Section 515 loans, which will preserve thousands of affordable housing units.

**Food Safety:** The bill provides \$1.19 billion for the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), an increase of \$32 million over fiscal year 2023. This funding will help ensure FSIS can continue its vital work protecting America’s food supply without being forced to reduce its staffing levels, which would jeopardize food safety and exacerbate supply chain delays.

**Promoting Competition:** The bill provides an increase of \$2.5 million for enforcement of the Packers and Stockyards Act to promote competition and prevent unfair or deceptive practices and monopolies.

**International Food Aid:** The bill provides \$1.688 billion for the Food for Peace program and \$240 million for the McGovern-Dole Food for Education program. As the world experiences an unprecedented hunger crisis, this funding will continue to combat hunger abroad—and save lives.

**Conservation:** The bill provides \$951 million for conservation programs. It also prioritizes multi-benefit projects in the Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations program.

**Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC):** The bill provides \$365 million for the CFTC.

**Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS):** The bill also includes language that makes the Secretary of Agriculture a member of CFIUS to help review foreign agriculture transactions, and provides \$2 million to support this work.

###