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FOOD STAMP FACTS

GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED BUDGETS CUT VITAL ELIGIBILITY WORKERS

PROPOSED CUTS

The governor's proposed Department of Human Services (DHS) budgets cut 64 eligibility workers for the rest of this fiscal year (FY 2010) and 137 eligibility workers for FY 2011, which begins July 1.

Eligibility workers process applications for Georgians in need of "safety net" supports — Food Stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), Medicaid, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES

The Great Recession has caused increasing numbers of Georgians to seek critical safety net supports. According to DHS Commissioner Walker, Georgia's food stamp caseload grew by 158,777 cases (32 percent) between December 2008 and December 2009.

DHS is required to improve the number of food stamp applications processed within the first 30 days from 82 percent to 95 percent.

Decreasing the number of eligibility workers is moving in the wrong direction. Less eligibility workers and more eligible Georgians mean that the impact likely will be delayed application processing and delayed receipt of food stamp benefits to hungry children.

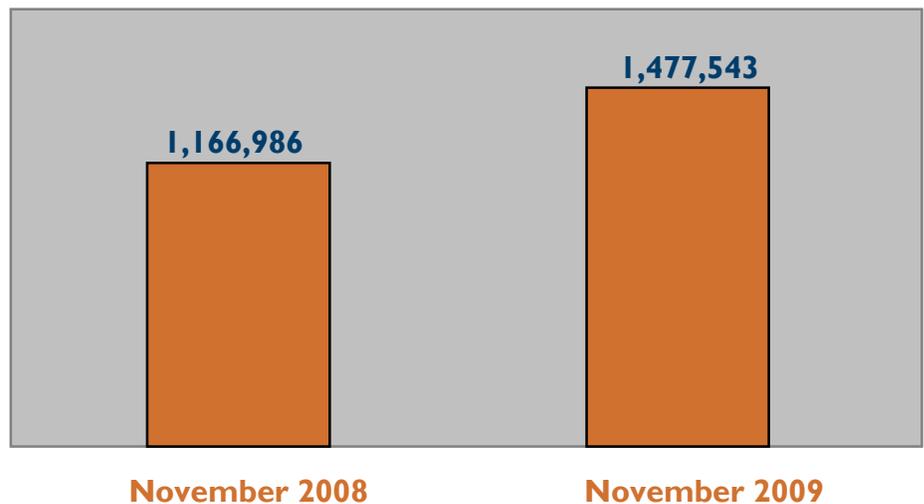
In addition, delaying food stamp benefits not only hurts struggling families (low-income workers are laid-off in the

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N

A BETTER CHOICE: New federal money for food stamp administrative costs is available to the states through September 2011 to help states cope with rising caseloads. Georgia is eligible to receive \$14.9 million.

Georgia should use the new funds to increase the number of eligibility caseworkers and to expand outreach efforts to newly eligible families. Policymakers should *not* use these funds to supplant state funds.

GEORGIA FOOD STAMP PARTICIPANTS



highest rates), it also postpones the positive impact of local spending with food stamps, which is proven to boost local economies.

For more information, visit www.GBPI.org.

THOUGHTFUL ANALYSIS...RESPONSIBLE POLICY

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