December 4, 2013

Re: House-Senate Conference on Agriculture and Nutrition Legislation

The Honorable Frank D. Lucas
U.S. House of Representatives
2311 Rayburn Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Debbie A. Stabenow
United States Senate
133 Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Lucas and Senator Stabenow:

I write on behalf of the American Bar Association to urge the Conference Committee on the respective Senate- and House-passed Farm Bills (S.954, H.R.2642, H.R.3102) to accept the Senate provision regarding funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The Association is concerned that significant cutbacks to the SNAP program will result in many citizens’ facing hunger and malnourishment. On November 1, 2013, over $5 billion in cuts to the SNAP program went into effect with the expiration of funding under 2009-enacted economic stimulus package. The Senate-passed farm bill, S.954, would cut an additional $4 billion over ten years from SNAP funding, while the House-passed bills would reduce funding by $39 billion over the same period.

We understand that difficult fiscal choices must be made as Congress works to reach balanced federal spending policies. We are concerned, nonetheless, that proposed reductions to SNAP will result in failure to support millions of American families and children in maintaining the basic necessity of adequate food and nutrition. For this reason, we respectfully urge the Conference Committee to adopt the Senate-passed provisions for SNAP.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Susman

cc: Members of the Conference Committee