



## Dannel P. Malloy

GOVERNOR  
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

March 17, 2014

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

I write to take issue with statements you have made that characterize decisions by states to implement a provision included in the Agriculture Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-79) as somehow dishonest and criminal.

Both *The Hill* and *Bloomberg Businessweek* quote you: "Since the passage of the Farm Bill, states have found ways to cheat, once again, on signing up people for food stamps, . . . [a]nd so I would hope that the House would act to try to stop this cheating and this fraud from continuing."

Let's be clear about this law and what Sec. 4006 affords to states:

" . . . if a state agency elects to use a standard utility allowance that reflects heating and cooling costs, the standard utility allowance shall be made available to households that received a payment, or on behalf of which a payment was made, under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8621 et seq.) or other similar energy assistance program, if in the current month or in the immediately preceding 12 months, the household either received such a payment, or such a payment was made on behalf of the household, that was greater than \$20 annually, as determined by the Secretary."

To characterize as cheating and fraud states' implementation of this provision is disingenuous at best and shameful at worst. Clearly, Congress intended to grant states the authority to provide this vital benefit which is a lifeline to some of our most vulnerable constituents.

Furthermore, your demonization of states that have elected to provide this benefit impugns the children, the elderly, the disabled, the low wage workers and veterans who receive such aid by implying that they are a party to something criminal. To the contrary, I think most would argue that denying residents of my state \$112 a month in nutrition assistance is morally wrong.

To quote Pope Francis: "In a world where there is so much wealth, so many resources to feed everyone, it is unfathomable that there are so many hungry children, that there are so many children without an education, so many poor persons."

Congress wrote the bill. Congress passed the bill. And now states are implementing the law, your reprehensible comments notwithstanding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dannel P. Malloy". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "M".

Dannel P. Malloy  
Governor