H. R.  

To amend the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 to repeal a certain disqualification to receive benefits under title IV of the Social Security Act and benefits under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008; and to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to provide that incarcerated individuals who are scheduled to be released from an institution within 30 days shall be considered to be a household for purposes of such Act.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Cohen introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on ________________________

A BILL

To amend the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 to repeal a certain disqualification to receive benefits under title IV of the Social Security Act and benefits under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008; and to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to provide that incarcerated individuals who are scheduled to be released from an institution within 30 days shall be considered to be a household for purposes of such Act.
Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Making Essentials
Available and Lawful (MEAL) Act of 2021”.

SEC. 2. TANF ASSISTANCE AND SNAP BENEFITS.

(a) REPEAL OF BAN ON ASSISTANCE.—Section 115
of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconcili-
ation Act of 1996 (21 U.S.C. 862a) is repealed.

(b) EFFECT ON STATE ELECTIONS TO OPT OUT OR
LIMIT PERIOD OF PROHIBITION.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

(A) the term “State” has the meaning
given the term in section 115(e) of the Personal
Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconcili-
ation Act of 1996 (21 U.S.C. 862a(e)) (as in
effect on the day before the date of enactment
of this Act); and

(B) the term “TANF assistance or SNAP
benefits” means assistance or benefits referred
to in section 115(a) of the Personal Responsi-
bility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act
of 1996 (as in effect on the day before the date
of enactment of this Act).
(2) Effect on state policies.—Any law enacted by a State under the authority under subparagraph (A) or (B) of subsection (d)(1) of section 115 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (21 U.S.C. 862a), and any State law, policy, or regulation that imposes conditions on eligibility for the supplemental nutrition assistance program and temporary assistance for needy families program based on an individual’s conviction of an offense related to a controlled substance, shall have no force or effect.

SEC. 3. MODIFICATION OF DEFINITION OF HOUSEHOLD FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING SNAP BENEFITS.

Section 3(m)(5) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012(m)(5)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(H) Incarcerated individuals are who scheduled to be released from an institution within 30 days.”.