

Stories About 3SquaresVT & Potential Impact of Cuts

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Kathy, Barre

“If 3SquaresVT were cut, my family would go without. I would probably go to jail because I would end up having to break the law to feed the kids. As it is most things you buy are as unhealthy as hell because that is all I (we) can afford. Bag of apples - \$5.99. Box of brownies - \$2.29. A 2-liter of soda \$.99. A gallon of orange juice - \$4.99. I have five kids, three still at home and when I buy food, I buy for them. My 12-year-old daughter started crying one day, because she was worried how we would be able to buy food!!! How nuts that my 12-year-old would ever, ever worry about such a thing!!!”

Kelly, Montpelier

“3Squares helps my family immensely. I’m a single mom with two small children and receive about \$500 a month. Food stamps ease the pressure of me having to decide between buying food or paying a utility. If my benefit is decreased then, I fear, I will go further into debt. I will 8-out-of-10 times feed my children before I pay a bill. Many Vermonters will do the same thing. Food is not a privilege or a right; it’s a NEED, a need that, even without the decrease in benefits, not everyone is receiving.”

Charlene, Bennington

“I am a single mom of two teenage children who live with me. We receive 3SquaresVT food stamps monthly and if they stop this my family will starve. I am on social security disability and this is all we have to live on. If it weren't for the food stamps we would have no food at all. I ask that they reconsider the change that they want to make. My dad is 80 yrs old, a veteran who served in two wars. He is having a hard time trying to get food stamps now as it is. Please don't take our food stamps or health insurance away from us. We need this program now more than anything. I strongly believe that if the government reduces this program even 20 %, you will see the worst poverty level in VT or anywhere for that matter.”

Gwen, Williamstown

“I was receiving food stamps and received \$360 a month. I was renting a room from my mother along with my fiancé and my son. When we moved into our own place we were paying over twice as much for rent plus our utilities. They dropped our food stamp amount. Then when I got a part time job they dropped them again. I now receive \$185 a month for two adults and an 18-month-old baby. This makes it very hard to have three nutritious meals a day, as by the time the bills are all paid there is not much money left over. If they were to cut SNAP benefits again, I don't know what I would do. I would have to do even more processed food and less nutritious foods.”

Jessi, Winooski

I am an AmeriCorps VISTA serving the City of Winooski's Community Development Department. I relocated here from New Mexico to serve Winooski's refugee youth population as grant writer and volunteer coordinator for the Underground Teen Center. Currently, I receive \$820 per month in living allowance and I spend three quarters of it on rent, fuel and utilities. Without the food assistance I receive from 3SquaresVT, I would most certainly be struggling financially more than I already am; without it, I'd gain significant debt during my one year service. The benefits I receive from 3SquaresVT take my mind off of worrying where my next meal will come from and allow me to focus more fully on my contribution to this community.

Marion, Strafford

An elderly couple on a fixed income, Marion states, "The benefit certainly helps, with the price of food, and with gas. If we didn't have them [3SquaresVT], it'd be a big let down. We'd have to cut back, but we can't cut rent or heat. We'd have to cut food; I don't really know how."

Roger, Hartford

"If food stamps were cut, I'd have to starve. They really help my wife and me. Rent takes more than half my social security, and only leaves a little to live with...then there's gas and repairs. Money for food makes a difference. It's \$132 a month but we spend that in one week."

Steve, South Burlington

Steve is a currently unemployed laborer due to back injuries, and states, "3SquaresVT helps to keep me surviving and feel independent, not having to rely on other people for this basic need."

Lynn, Burlington

Lynn and her spouse have four children and custody of Lynn's sister as well. This family of seven lives in Burlington. Lynn states "With 3SquaresVT I am able to get my children more healthy foods (fresh produce etc.) Without it, I would have to only buy boxed, cheap, unhealthy stuff (ramen noodles, for example, and macaroni and cheese)."

Peg, Burlington

Peg is a widowed 83-year-old woman who lives in Burlington and says that "3SquaresVT are a wonderful blessing to me, especially with food prices going up all the time. Sometimes you have to take away from Peter to pay Paul - without 3SquaresVT I would have to do that."

