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**BILL NO.: HB 183**

**TITLE:** Human Services – Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for Children Act)

**SPONSOR:** Chair Barnes (By Request – Departmental – Human Services)

**COMMITTEE:** Appropriations

**POSITION:** **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

**DATE:** January 23, 2024

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS WITH AMENDMENTS** House Bill 183 – Human Services – Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for Children Act). This legislation would expand the State funding to Summer SNAP for Children from \$200,000 to \$5,000,000. Summer SNAP for Children is a key program for helping low-income families put food on the table for school-age children during the summer months, when they don't have access to school breakfast and lunch.

Every child deserves access to fresh, healthy foods. Baltimore County has taken steps year after year to ensure that the benefits from the Summer SNAP for Children reach as many children as possible. Summer SNAP for Children provides an additional \$30 in food support per eligible child during the summer months of June, July, and August, and \$10 over the winter break in December. Families already registered in the SNAP program do not need to take action to receive this benefit; monthly benefits for enrolled children between the ages of 7 and 18 will be automatically credited to users' EBT cards.

Baltimore County took initiative starting in the Summer of 2022 to expand the program using local funds; \$1,222,760 from Baltimore County combined with \$1,556,240 from the state provided supplemental benefits for nearly 28,000 eligible children. This level of commitment was continued for the Summer of 2023. A 2019 study by Towson University concluded that an increased state investment in Summer SNAP to \$2,000,000 would create a 13 percent increase in jobs and 7 percent increase in economic output. The expansion of funding to \$5,000,000 would create an even greater economic impact.

Due to changes in federal rules that allow states to participate in a federally funded Summer EBT program for school age children, Baltimore County recommends expanding the language in the bill to allow State funding to be used as part of the required match for Administrative costs associated with operating the Summer EBT program. The current bill language limits use of State funds to paying for “supplements” only. Under the federal program, all costs for the supplements themselves are paid from federal funds and States are only required to provide funding to match the Administrative costs for operating the program at a 50% match rate. The bill language should be expanded to allow for this use of State funds.

Accordingly, Baltimore County urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on HB 183. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at [jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov).