



**Testimony in support of
House Bill 183: Human Services – Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for
Children Act)**

**Appropriations Committee
Position: Favorable
January 23, 2024**

The Summer SNAP for Children Act passed in 2019 sought to expand the SNAP program for the summer months by providing an additional \$30 per child, monthly, from June to August. Alterations made to the original bill during the 2019 session reduced the proposed funding from \$2 million to \$200,000, limiting the program’s reach. This funding constraint inhibits the program’s ability to address childhood food insecurity, impacting children’s psychological wellbeing, physical health, and academic ability.

Strong Schools Maryland is a network of education advocates dedicated to ensuring the faithful implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future. The Blueprint guarantees a world class education for all students and commits our public school system to supporting the needs of the families they serve. Food security is a crucial component of a student’s ability to thrive and achieve. As such, **Strong Schools Maryland urges a favorable vote on House Bill 183.**

HB183 increases the funding to \$5 million which would significantly increase the bandwidth of the program, allowing for more children to receive these supplements. With 246,000 Maryland students currently relying on free or reduced cost meals during the school year, this bill aims to better meet their needs in the summer. Not only does this bill show our commitment to our students, it also recognizes the departmental needs of the Summer SNAP program by adjusting organizational structures and mandating evaluations regarding the effectiveness of the program.

We implore this committee to build Maryland’s capacity to eliminate childhood food insecurity so that children can live to their fullest potential both in and outside of school.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on House Bill 183.

For more information, contact Kenzie Funk:

kenzie@strongschoolsmaryland.org