



Delaware-Maryland Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Testimony Prepared for the
Appropriations Committee
on
Senate Bill 35
March 26, 2024
Position: **Favorable**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committees, thank you for this opportunity to testify about nutrition and well-being for the children of our State. I am Lee Hudson, assistant to the bishop of the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, for public policy. We are a faith community in three judicatories scattered across our State.

Our community's work in policy advocacy began as a commitment to end hunger. That remains one of the principal goals of our work, nationally and internationally. It was advanced in 1999 with, "Economic Life," (ELCA, re: *the moral imperative to seek sufficient, sustainable livelihood for all*). We maintain a permanent institutional appeal to address, and advocate for, an end to hunger in the United States, and anywhere in the world where we are represented by constituent assemblies and service organizations.

Child hunger is something like a permanent public scandal in the United States. **Senate Bill 35** lowers the age for SNAP eligibility and increases the benefit to a more adequate amount, intents we can agree with. Feeding more children with better benefits, certainly, we argue, benefits the public whole.

Even in wealthy and progressive Maryland child hunger is still prevalent. Children have no agency over their economic circumstance and the perils of child malnourishment are social, not just individual. We are pleased, then, to support this bill; and therefore urge your favorable report.

Lee Hudson