

**HB0183-FIN-SUPP.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nina Themelis

Position: FAV



**BRANDON M. SCOTT**  
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations  
88 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

March 21, 2024

**TO:** Members of the Senate Finance Committee

**FROM:** Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

**RE:** House Bill 183 – Human Services - Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for Children Act)

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) supports House Bill (HB) 183.

Among other things, HB 183 authorizes the Department of Human Services to use certain funding to provide matching funds to counties to supplement federal nutrition benefits for families with children age 18 and under during the months when their children are not in school. Many Baltimore City families rely on City Schools to ensure their children are getting the food they need, with 31,820 Baltimore children considered “food insecure,” meaning they do not have enough to eat and are uncertain where their next meal will come from.<sup>i</sup> The supplemental funding authorized by this bill would provide critical additional funds to Maryland families so they can buy healthy food.

More than 28% of Baltimore City children live in “healthy food priority areas” (previously referred to as “food deserts”).<sup>ii</sup> While the National School Lunch Program provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost, or free lunches each school day, families – especially those living in healthy food priority areas – struggle to find, much less afford, nutritious meals for their children when schools are not in session. When healthy options are not affordable, families have no choice but to rely on the less expensive food options available to them, which tend to be high in sodium, saturated fat, and sugar.<sup>iii</sup> This poor nutrition can lead to children being under or over-weight, both of which are highly associated with weaker immune systems and greater potential for poor health outcomes such as hypertension, diabetes, and asthma. Better nutrition would be a boon for Baltimore City children, one-third of whom are either overweight or obese, and 20 percent of whom are diagnosed with asthma.<sup>iv,v</sup> Good nutrition is also associated with improved mood, better sleep, and even better brain functioning.<sup>vi</sup> Not only would this bill help families get enough to eat – it would help keep children healthier year-round.

For the above reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on HB 183.

<sup>i</sup> Feeding America. (2021). Food Insecurity among Child (<18 years) Population in Baltimore city County. Retrieved from <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2021/child/maryland/county/baltimore-city>

<sup>ii</sup> Baltimore City Department of Planning. (2018). Baltimore City's Food Environment Report: 2018. Retrieved from <https://clf.jhsph.edu/sites/default/files/2019-01/baltimore-city-food-environment-2018-report.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> Kern, D. M., Auchincloss, A. H., Stehr, M. F., Roux, A. V. D., Moore, L. V., Kanter, G. P., & Robinson, L. F. (2017). Neighborhood Prices of Healthier and Unhealthier Foods and Associations with Diet Quality: Evidence from the Multi-Ethnic Study of Atherosclerosis. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 14(11), 1394. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14111394>

<sup>iv</sup> Baltimore City Health Department. (n.d.). ReThinkYourDrink. Retrieved from <https://health.baltimorecity.gov/sugar-sweetened-beverages>

<sup>v</sup> The Abell Foundation. (2020). Pediatric Asthma. Retrieved from <https://abell.org/publication/pediatric-asthma/#:~:text=The%20report%20finds%20that%20an,asthma%20symptoms%20and%20improve%20their>

<sup>vi</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). Childhood Nutrition Facts. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/nutrition/facts.htm>

**HB0183 - FAV - DHS.pdf**

Uploaded by: Rachel Sledge Government Affairs

Position: FAV

March 21, 2024

The Honorable Pamela Beidle  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 East  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: TESTIMONY ON HB0183 - HUMAN SERVICES - FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM (SUMMER SNAP FOR CHILDREN ACT) AND HUMAN SERVICES CAREERS SCHOLARSHIPS - ALTERATIONS - POSITION: FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the House Appropriations Committee:

The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) thanks the Committee for consideration of HB 183. With offices in every one of Maryland's jurisdictions, DHS helps Marylanders in economic need, provides preventive services, and protects children and adults. The Family Investment Administration (FIA) within DHS administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) program which is impacted by HB 183.

Since the bill was enacted in 2019, Summer SNAP for Children has grown from serving 3,923 children in four jurisdictions to 90,571 children in fourteen jurisdictions in 2023. The proposed amendments to Human Services §5-501.1 seek to address certain timelines which do not align with the state's budgeting schedule and the federal SNAP program. The deadlines outlined in the Summer SNAP for Children Act bill present operational challenges to DHS to make sure we serve our customers more seamlessly.

The current law as written, requires DHS to initiate the Summer SNAP application for local jurisdictions in December, before the program budget is determined. Also, in its current form, the Act requires that Summer SNAP benefits be issued 15 days following the dates on which federal SNAP benefits are issued in June through August; and 7 days after the December issuance. In Maryland, SNAP benefits are issued monthly between the 4th and the 23rd, based on the first three letters of the recipient's last name. If DHS follows the schedule stipulated in the Act, some of the Summer SNAP benefits will not be issued in the designated month. This causes unnecessary and burdensome confusion for the customer and puts the agency at risk of audit findings.

We request the partnership of the Committee in amending 5-501.1(G) on page 6 of the bill to state that funding for Summer SNAP for Children is subject to limitations in the State budget, and may be used at the discretion of DHS. Amending 5-501.1(G) is necessary for the continued administration of Summer SNAP for Children. The amendments will build on the progress of the 2023 state Summer SNAP program which enabled local departments of social services to serve the children with the greatest food



needs. The amendments give DHS the flexibility to align resources for the state Summer SNAP Program with the new federal Summer EBT Program allowing Maryland to maximize the federal funds to serve an estimated 500,000 school-age children's nutritional needs when they are out of school and unable to rely on free or reduced school meals beginning Summer 2024.

House Bill 183 also contains amendments to the statutes establishing the Human Services Careers Pilot Program under Education § 3901-3903, and Human Services §2303, reflected on pages 2, 6 and 7 of the bill. The Department concurs with these amendments as they strengthen the Human Services Careers Pilot Program introduced by Speaker Jones and passed by the Maryland General Assembly in 2023 under House Bill 982. The amendments are essential to move the program forward effectively.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit HB 183 to the Committee for consideration during your deliberations. We look forward to working with you and welcome continued collaboration on HB 183.

If you require additional information, please contact Rachel Sledge, Director of Government Affairs, at [rachel.sledge@maryland.gov](mailto:rachel.sledge@maryland.gov).

In service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rafael López', written in a cursive style.

Rafael López  
Secretary

**HB0183\_Summer\_SNAP\_for\_Children\_Act\_MLC\_FWA.pdf**

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FWA



**TESTIMONY FOR HB0183**  
**Human Services - Food Supplement Program and Human Services Careers**  
**Scholarships - Alterations**

**Bill Sponsor:** Chair, Appropriations Committee

**Committee:** Finance

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Aileen Alex, co-chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0183 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Earlier this legislative session, we provided testimony in support of HB 183/SB 213 because we strongly support the Summer SNAP for Children program, which ensures that children have the resources they need to grow and thrive.

Unfortunately, HB 183 (with amendments that passed the House Appropriations committee on 3/8), will defund this successful and vital food assistance. Last summer, more than 100,000 children received this supplemental funding on their SNAP cards to help families make ends meet. Families eligible for SNAP are very low-income. For example, a family of 3 may be eligible if their income is less than \$33,000 a year. While the federal SNAP ("food stamps") program provides vital support, the federal benefit levels do not account for the fact that many families still struggle to put food on the table during the summer months when schools are closed, school meals disappear, and childcare costs skyrocket. Summer SNAP for Children helps fill this gap by automatically adding to existing SNAP food assistance cards \$30+ per child, per summer month and an additional \$10+ per child during the winter. All funding goes directly to children in the

lowest income households, without additional administrative or overhead costs.

Nonprofits like ours work hard to support children and families with their immediate needs -- but can not do it alone. Programs like Summer SNAP for Children reduce poverty and food insecurity by addressing the root causes and we strongly support its continued operation.

**Please vote for Delegate Queen's amendments HB 183**, which will protect this vital program and maintain the minimum \$200,000 in state funding that is required in statute. Towson University economists found that additional state funding for *Summer SNAP for Children* [will greatly benefit the economy while reducing food insecurity, creating additional jobs, and increasing tax revenues.](#)

For these reasons, we believe the Summer SNAP for Children Act has benefits for children, their families, and all Marylanders.

MLC supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report in committee.



**hb183- summer SNAP- FIN 3-21-2024.pdf**

Uploaded by: Lee Hudson

Position: FWA



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

Testimony Prepared for the  
**Finance Committee**

on

**House Bill 183**

March 21, 2024

Position: **Favorable w amendments**

Madam Chair 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 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 a persistent public scandal in the United States. One of the social defects illuminated by Covid19 was a spike in malnourishment among children because of the loss of nutritional resources delivered through the public education system.

The federal extension of SNAP COVID-19 Administrative Flexibilities in 2021 had a beneficial effect on child health and wellness by ensuring more adequate nutrition for thousands of them more consistently.

Maryland has an opportunity to improve SNAP nutritional benefits for its children during the summer months when its schools are not in session and available as platforms for child nutrition. The first reading of **House Bill 183** would have done that by adding in the months of June, July, and August to household benefit allowances (with a lesser amount for December). The bill that has crossed to the Senate from the floor of the House where it was crippled, would not do that.

However, amendments offered Delegate Pam Queen would result in more robust nutritional service for eligible children. This is the goal we want to support. Our *Favorable with amendments* support, then, refers to **Del. Queen's amendments**.

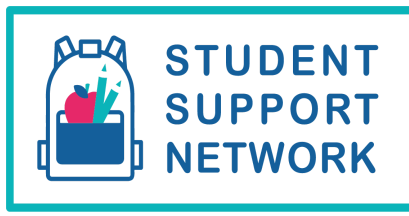
Even in wealthy and progressive Maryland child hunger is still prevalent. Children have no agency over their economic circumstance and the perils of child malnourishment are social, not just individual. We support a favorable report on an amended bill.

Lee Hudson

# **HB183 Testimony Senate Finance Committee.pdf**

Uploaded by: Tam Lynne Kelley

Position: FWA



## **Senate Finance Committee**

**March 21, 2024**

**House Bill 183**

**Position: Favorable with Delegate Queen's Amendments**

At the Student Support Network, we work to meet the immediate needs of students in Baltimore County Public Schools so that they have the resources they need to grow and thrive. We also advocate for change related to the underlying issues that cause food insecurity and poverty because we can not do it alone. Programs like Summer SNAP for Children reduce poverty and food insecurity by addressing the root causes and **we strongly support** its continued operation.

When House Bill 183 was first introduced, it increased funding for Summer SNAP for Children from the current mandated state appropriation of just \$200,000 to \$5 million annually. Unfortunately, the bill was heavily amended in the Appropriations Committee and now will completely defund the program, even the modest \$200,000 currently required. Delegate Queen has submitted amendments that will restore the \$200,000 minimum state appropriation and will make small changes to the Summer SNAP for Children program to allow for it to complement the new federal Summer EBT program.

Summer SNAP for Children provides direct and automatic food assistance for children in Maryland's lowest income households. Last summer, more than 100,000 children received Summer SNAP for Children, providing a total of nearly \$10M in direct food assistance (\$5M from the state and \$4.5M from matching funding required by county governments). Summer SNAP for Children is jointly funded by both the state and the counties, with the state contributing 50-95% of the cost, depending on the wealth of the county. For example, last year, 27,801 children in Baltimore County received a total of \$2.7M in direct food support from Summer SNAP for Children. Of this, \$1M was state funded and \$1.7M was funded by Baltimore County.

Summer SNAP for Children builds on the successful Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which supported [772,700 Maryland residents](#), 13% of the state population, in FY 2022. This includes [184,227 Maryland households with children](#) that receive SNAP benefits and therefore are eligible for Summer SNAP for Children. Families eligible for SNAP are very low-income. For example, a family of 3 may be eligible if their income is less than \$33,000 a year. While SNAP provides vital support, the benefit levels do not account for the fact that many families still struggle to put food on the table during the summer months when schools are closed, school meals disappear, and childcare costs skyrocket. Summer SNAP for Children helps fill this gap by automatically adding to existing SNAP food assistance cards \$30+ per child, per summer month and an additional \$10+ per child during the winter. All funding goes directly to children in the lowest income households, without additional administrative or overhead costs.

Maryland's Summer SNAP for Children was first implemented in 2020 with \$200,000 in state funding and the program supported less than 5,000 children in the first few years. State funding was significantly increased to \$5 million in 2022 and when combined with county match funding, more than 102,645 children in Maryland were able to participate.

The cost to fully fund Summer SNAP for Children is just \$100 per child, per year and the amendments offered by Delegate Queen require just \$200,000 in state funding to help feed children. Towson University economists found that additional state funding for Summer SNAP for Children [will greatly benefit the economy while reducing food insecurity, creating additional jobs, and increasing tax revenues.](#) Given the high cost of food, inflation, and poverty rates, our children and families desperately need your support.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tam Lynne Kelley, LMSW  
Chair, Advocacy Committee  
Student Support Network  
[advocacy@studentsupportnetwork.org](mailto:advocacy@studentsupportnetwork.org)

## **Additional Information Re: Proposed Amendments to HB183**

### **Changing Eligibility from All to One or More Child(ren) in the Household**

By striking “each child” and adding, “one or more of the eligible child(ren)” in (b)(1), the amendment will allow the Summer SNAP for Children program to complement the new federal program coming in 2024, when school-aged children eligible for free and reduced-price school meals will be eligible for the new Summer EBT benefits.

Low-income children ages 0-5 are not eligible for the federal Summer EBT program and research shows that children living in poverty during the first 5 years of life are significantly more likely to experience a host of [negative effects](#), including on their [school readiness](#). By adding "one or more eligible children," the amendment will allow a county to provide Summer SNAP for Children benefits to some, but not all children in a household if they choose in their implementation plan. If a county chooses to participate in both programs, this amendment will permit them to provide a Summer SNAP for Children benefit only to young children ages 0-6, with the understanding that children 6-18 will receive Summer EBT. Since many young children live in families with siblings, it is important to provide support for all the children in the family, not just those who are school age. Otherwise, the school aged children with young siblings will essentially receive a smaller benefit because their benefit must be stretched among all family members.

The amendment will also allow a county to choose to fund Summer SNAP for Children benefits to all children ages 0-19 on SNAP. Therefore, those with the lowest incomes could get both Summer SNAP for Children (\$30 mo) and Summer EBT (\$40 mo) – a total of \$70 supplement per summer month. Whereas children eligible for free or reduced-price school meals and not enrolled in SNAP will receive just Summer EBT (\$40 mo). This will provide a larger benefit for kids in deeper poverty, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

### **Schedules and Deadlines**

The purpose of the amendment that adds “before” in (c)(1) and (c)(2) is to address the Department’s concern about scheduling the issuance of benefits within the specific calendar month. This schedule addresses the negative impacts of the fact that SNAP benefits are issued every 30 days and are typically exhausted within two weeks. As a result of the "SNAP 30-day benefit cycle," [diet quality declines at the end of the benefit month](#) and [negative health impacts](#) are evident.

Issuing Summer SNAP for Children benefits on a different day than the federal SNAP benefit will also help families to differentiate the Summer SNAP for Children benefit from their regular federal SNAP benefit.

Note that the amendments retain currently proposed language to eliminate “December 1” on page 2, line 15 and the language in lines 18-19. This will allow the Department to set the dates

for program administration that is best. Similarly, the proposed amendments keep the other changes proposed by HB183 on pages 3 and 4, which address timelines for program administration.

### **Evaluation Requirement**

The amendment strikes language that directs the county to conduct an evaluation of the program in because smaller counties may not have the resources to conduct a study and should not be required to do so.

### **Funding for Summer SNAP for Children**

Amendments strike language to allow funding for Summer SNAP for Children to be reallocated to administrative needs. A key strength of Summer SNAP for Children is that all funding goes directly to families in need.

Finally, the amendments restore the original mandated appropriation of \$200,000.

## **Comparison of Summer SNAP for Children and Summer EBT**

**Summer SNAP for Children** is an existing state and county funded program unique to Maryland that was first implemented in 2020. **Summer EBT** is a new federal program that states can opt into beginning in 2024.. **Maryland’s children need both programs.** The state can, and must, continue to operate the successful Summer SNAP for Children program while also opting into the new federal Summer EBT program. Both programs are vital and effective strategies that reduce poverty and food insecurity.

	<b>Summer SNAP for Children</b>	<b>Summer EBT</b>
<b>Benefit Level</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Minimum</b> of \$100 per child, per year, with at least \$30 per month (June, July, August) and \$10 in December</li> <li>● Benefits provided automatically on SNAP card</li> <li>● ALL funding goes directly to children in the lowest income households, without administrative costs</li> <li>● Families do not need to complete an application</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● \$40 per month in 3 summer months, increased with inflation each year</li> <li>● Benefits provided on electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card that is mailed to family</li> </ul>
<b>Availability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● County must apply to participate to receive state matching funding</li> <li>● In FY 2024, 14 jurisdictions participated</li> <li>● Children ages 0-19 in households with income below 100-130% of the poverty level and enrolled in SNAP.</li> <li>● Only Summer SNAP for Children includes young children (ages 0-6)</li> <li>● Benefits are automatically added to SNAP cards – families do not need to sign up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All school-aged children eligible for free and reduced-price school meals (FARMS) with household incomes below 185% of the poverty level</li> <li>● Some families need to complete an application</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● If both the programs are in use, children with the lowest incomes (below 100-130% of the poverty level) would get both benefits, a total of \$70 in supplements per summer month and school-aged children eligible for FARMS, but not SNAP, will receive \$40 per summer month from Summer EBT</li> <li>● Alternatively, Summer SNAP for Children could be provided to children ages 0-6 only, to allow all ages of children in the lowest-income families to receive some summer food support (i.e. Ages 0-6 receive Summer SNAP for Children and ages 6-19 receive Summer EBT.)</li> <li>● Summer SNAP for Children is designed to allow counties to designate the subset of children that will receive benefits, if funding is insufficient to provide benefits for all children.</li> </ul>	
<b>Fund Source</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Jointly funded by both the state and counties, depending on the wealth of the county</li> <li>● \$200,000 is mandated in statute</li> <li>● State funding was increased to \$5M in 2022</li> <li>● County funding added another additional ~\$5M</li> <li>● More than <b>102,645 children</b> benefit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Federal funding available for 100% of the benefits</li> <li>● State funding required for half of administrative costs</li> <li>● Maryland expects to receive \$69M in federal benefits for 500,000 school-aged children</li> </ul>

***Maryland can, and must, provide BOTH programs to support our state’s children.***