



Wes Moore | Governor

Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor

Carmel Roques | Secretary

Date: January 31, 2025

Bill Number: HB538

Bill Title: Department of Human Services - Federal Commodity Supplemental Food Program - Administration

Committee: Appropriations

MDOA Position: FAVORABLE

The Department of Aging (MDOA) thanks the Chair and Committee members for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill (HB) 538 - Department of Human Services - Federal Commodity Supplemental Food Program - Administration.

The Maryland Department of Aging (MDOA) serves as Maryland's State Unit of Aging, administering federal funding for core programs, overseeing the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) network at the local level that provides services, and planning for Maryland's older adult population.

HB538 represents a collaborative agreement between MDOA and the Department of Human Services to transfer complete responsibility for administering the Commodities Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) program that is funded from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, from MDOA to DHS. This federal program funds the purchase and distribution of "commodity" boxes with boxed and canned food goods for low-income families and older adults aged 60 and older.

For the past several years MDOA has been responsible for receiving funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodities Supplemental Food Program. However, MDOA is currently the only state unit on aging that serves as the manager and coordinating entity for this program. Most other states utilize different state agencies to administer this program, typically the state agency that runs other U.S. Department of Agriculture food programs. MDOA has experienced significant fiscal and operational challenges in administering this program in recent years.



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DHS capably administers several individual, income-based benefits and is simply a better equipped agency to take over this important program for older Marylanders. Specifically, DHS administers other U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition services, like SNAP benefits. DHS reports it will be able to oversee the CSFP program into their Emergency Food Assistance Program.

For these reasons, the Department of Aging respectfully urges a favorable report for House Bill 538. If you have any questions, please contact Andrea Nunez, Legislative Director, at andrea.nunez@maryland.gov or (443) 414-8183.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carmel Roques". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the "s".

Carmel Roques
Secretary
Maryland Department of Aging