

**Maryland State House Committee  
March 10, 2022**

**TESTIMONY  
HB 1027– SNAP for Students Act**

**Submitted by:  
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**Position:** Support

I want to extend my gratitude to the committee for taking the time to review and acknowledge my testimony concerning HB 1027, which will expand Supplemental Nutrition Program (SNAP) benefits for college students, an integral part of the fight against food insecurity. According to the [Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice](#), food insecurity is defined as “the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food, or the ability to acquire such food in a socially acceptable manner.” It is unsurprising to learn that students who have consistent access to food are more successful and more likely to achieve degree completion than if they did not have this access. Anecdotally in my role managing the food pantry at Anne Arundel Community College, I have heard students state with no uncertainty that being able to afford and access food directly contributes to them performing better academically.

Food insecurity continues to be a monumental and avoidable barrier to educational completion and success. One major side effect of food insecurity, hunger, represents an immediate need that must continually be addressed. Imagine, if you will, how you would perform your day to day responsibilities on an empty stomach. Perhaps you would feel faint, achy, exhausted, “hangry,” distracted, agitated. No one does their best work when their body lacks sustenance. The myth that college students survive happily on sodium rich and nutrient poor Ramen noodles leads to the dangerous notion that they are not worthy of proper nutrition simply because they cannot afford it. Being financially insecure must never equate to the degradation of being treated as less than human.

Systemically, 108 billion pounds of food, or roughly 130 billion meals are wasted in the United States each year ([per Feeding America](#)). This speaks directly to the inequitable access to food that is completely preventable with changes like that of this bill. Far too much food goes to waste rather than being purchased at more affordable costs. The SNAP for Students Act will tip the scales that have been unbalanced for far too long in terms of equitable access to food for college students experiencing food insecurity.

I respectfully request your support of this bill in order to offer holistic support to those college students who are experiencing chronic food insecurity. Change for the better can be implemented. You hold immense power to change lives, and I hope that you will continue to yield it well.