



Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition

**Testimony to the House Appropriations Committee
HB 1027: Food Supplement Benefits-Students-Eligibility (SNAP for Students)
Position: Favorable**

The Honorable Maggie McIntosh, Chair
House Appropriations Committee
Room 121, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
cc: Members, Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs Committee

Chair McIntosh and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition (MCRC) is a statewide coalition of individuals and organizations that advances financial inclusion and economic justice for Maryland consumers through research, education, direct service, and advocacy. Our 8,500 supporters include consumer advocates, practitioners, and low-income and working families throughout Maryland.

We are writing today to testify in support of HB 1027. HB 1027 builds on important work last session to address the critical, yet often overlooked issue of food insecurity on college campuses. According to a 2019 University of Maryland study, 20% of UMD students surveyed experienced food insecurity in the last 12 months.

Food insecurity harms students. Hungry students tend to have lower GPAs, higher dropout rates, and are less engaged in campus activities because of low energy levels. Failure to ensure college students have the nutrition needed to pursue their studies is an institutional failure, not a reflection of low-income students.

HB 1027 provides a simple solution. HB 1027 enables eligible college students to apply for food assistance. The bill is narrowly tailored so it won't be misused by students who don't need this assistance but when passed will provide critically needed assistance to our college students.

Any costs to enact this program are far outweighed by the benefits that accrue to individual students who can pursue their studies, to Maryland colleges who will see higher GPAs and graduation rates, and for working families who won't be saddled with the costs of paying off student loans without having gained the benefit of the degree.

For all of these reasons, we support HB 1027 and urge a favorable report.

Best,

Marceline White
Executive Director