

March 8, 2022

**2022 SESSION SUPPORT TESTIMONY  
HB1027/SB0921 Food Supplement Benefits – Students – Eligibility (SNAP for students)**

**COMMITTEE: Appropriations**

**POSITION: Testimony of Support of House Bill 1027**

**BILL ANALYSIS: Extending SNAP eligibility to higher education students**

**SIGNED: Maryland Food System Resiliency Council (FRSC)**

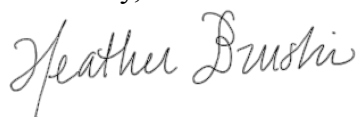
I submit this written testimony on behalf of our Maryland Food System Resiliency Council (FRSC) members (33 appointed members) – not the government or the Governor’s office - in SUPPORT of HB1027/SB0921. This legislation calls for SNAP benefit eligibility to be extended to students enrolled in higher education and who meet a certain eligibility income threshold. This bill works towards directly supporting the food security of university students by increasing food access resources.

The Food System Resiliency Council was established by the Maryland General Assembly in the 2021 legislative session to bring together 33 appointed council members from across the state, all with different points of entry and expertise to work toward a more resilient food system and address the food insecurity crisis due to COVID-19. One of the key mandates of this council was to develop a report by Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> 2021, detailing equity and sustainability policy recommendations to increase the long-term resiliency of the Maryland food system.

The FSRC report represents five months of intensive work and thought leadership on behalf of organizations, such as the state’s main two food banks, all the state’s food councils, leaders in anti-hunger advocacy, emergency food assistance providers, state administrators, emergency responders, food system experts, and universities.

In 2018, the University of Maryland found that 20% of the surveyed students reported that they were food insecure. The guidelines for extending SNAP benefits to higher education students laid out in HB1027/SB0921 support the recommendations in the FSRC report which strive to increase the food security and sustainability of our local Maryland communities. By passing HB1027/ SB0921, university students who are residents of the state of Maryland would be eligible for SNAP and would directly benefit from the increased food access that SNAP would provide.

Sincerely,



Heather Bruskin

Co-Chair, Maryland Food System Resiliency Council