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**HB 456 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-
State Supplement
Senate Finance Committee
Favorable
March 29, 2022**

Good afternoon Chairwoman Kelly and members of the Senate Finance Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 456 by Delegates Valentino-Smith and Ruth.

My name is Jim Campbell, a former member of the House of Delegates and now State President of AARP Maryland. AARP is one of the largest membership-based organizations in Maryland, encompassing more than 850,000 members.

AARP is a non-partisan, non-profit nationwide organization that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthen communities and advocate on those issues that most matter to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse.

We are pleased to support House Bill 456. The bill increases the increase the monthly supplemental benefit from 30 to \$40 a month. This change will provide a more livable benefit to some of our most vulnerable residents.

SNAP serves one in seven U.S. residents and helps to ensure that low-income households have access to adequate food and do not go hungry. Almost 870,000 Marylanders receive SNAP benefits, and 90,000 the recipients are ages 60 or older.

A recent study by the Food and Research Action Center reported that Maryland has the 8th highest food insecurity rate in the nation among the 60+ population and the 7th highest among those 50-59. The SNAP program has been shown to be effective in reducing food insecurity among older adults who have limited resources to spend on necessities such as food, housing, medical costs, and utilities. Researchers have found that participation in SNAP by older Americans, who are less likely to have to choose between food and other essentials, have a better chance of living independently, less likely to be hospitalized and less likely to enter a nursing home. It is estimated that taxpayers can save millions in healthcare expenditures by continuing to support programs like SNAP for older adults.

For these reasons, AARP Maryland supports HB 456 and respectfully asks the Senate Finance Committee to vote favorable. For questions please contact Tammy Bresnahan at tbresnahan@aarp.org