



DIVISION OF  
**STUDENT AFFAIRS**

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**HB 452 – Food Supplement Benefits – Students – Eligibility (SNAP for Students)**  
**House Appropriations Committee**  
**February 15, 2023**  
**Favorable**

Dear Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support of HB 452, sponsored by Delegate Aaron Kaufman, to permanently allow SNAP benefits for eligible students.

At the University of Maryland, our [Food Access and Student Well-Being Study](#) made us aware that as many as 20% of our students may experience food insecurity at some point during a semester. An estimated 8,000 UMD students not only experience hunger but also related vulnerabilities and barriers to their health and well-being.

The pandemic brought into sharp focus the widespread and urgent need to address this issue. We witnessed an unprecedented number of visits to our Campus Pantry. Since its opening in 2014, the University has worked steadily to assess and alleviate student hunger through the Campus Pantry Program, serving over 39,000 visitors, with more than 50% of those visits occurring since March 2020.

We have significantly transformed the conversation about food insecurity in our community from disbelief to awareness. This effort includes faculty, staff, students, parents, and alumni, as well as partners with local and statewide non-profit organizations. We offer student crisis funding and emergency meals, address housing insecurity through the Fostering Terp Success Program, and convene a Coalition for Terps Essential Needs to ensure coordination across efforts.

In addition, we aligned with partners across our campus and the state to raise awareness for the temporary expansion of SNAP eligibility enacted by Congress in December 2020. However, this important support available to our students in need is set to expire 30 days after the federally-declared COVID-19 health emergency ends, which may be as soon as May 11, 2023. I urge you to pass the Food Supplement Benefits (SNAP for Students) Bill, introduced by Delegate Kaufman. This bill will permanently allow students to be eligible for SNAP benefits if they are eligible for work study, have a zero dollar expected family contribution, or if they are receiving the maximum Pell Grant possible.

Our team will continue to lead the University of Maryland in creating a hunger-free campus, but our students need your help to expand existing programs that work to support food security to vulnerable Maryland students. Thank you for your consideration and we urge a favorable report on HB 452.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patricia Perillo".

Patricia Perillo, PhD  
Vice President for Student Affairs

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colleen Wright-Riva".

Colleen Wright-Riva  
Interim Assistant Vice President