

Committees: Appropriations

Testimony on: HB452

Position: Favorable

17 February 2023

Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and the members of the Appropriations Committee,

The University of Maryland, Student Government Association supports HB452 in requiring the Governor to include in the annual budget bill the Department of Human Services to provide food supplement benefits to students in Maryland's higher education institutions. This bill is important because it prioritizes food security in college aged students.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on this important piece of legislation. My name is Caroline Thorne and I serve as the Director of Government Affairs at the University of Maryland, College Park Student Government Association (SGA). On behalf of our SGA, I respectfully request a favorable report of House Bill 452 to help combat food insecurity in college students.

This legislation is a key step that would permanently allow students to be eligible for SNAP benefits if they are eligible for work study, or have a zero dollar expected family contribution including if they are receiving the maximum Pell Grant. In Spring 2018, [20% of UMD students](#) surveyed were food insecure, with an additional 21% of respondents reporting marginal food security levels, meaning anxieties over having insufficient food. Food insecurity has negative impacts on student well-being and academic performance.

In Spring 2021, our SGA allocated \$300,740 to help our campus pantry expand its services to 30 hours per week. According to Dining Services there have been [16,000 visits](#) to the Campus pantry since 2014, more than half of which were made during or after March 2020. This shows that food insecurity support services must go further than our campus pantry. This legislation has that capability, and provides essential support to students in need across our state. On behalf of the students at the University of Maryland, we kindly request a favorable report on HB452.

Thank you,



Caroline Thorne (she/her/hers)

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