

MARYLAND ACADEMY OF NUTRITION AND DIETETICS



Date: February 28, 2023
Bill: House Bill 514 - Education - Maryland Meals for Achievement In-Classroom Breakfast Program - Annual Appropriation
Committee: House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Ben Barnes, Chair
Position: **Support**

The Maryland Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (MAND) represents nearly 1200 Registered & Licensed Dietitian/Nutritionists in the state who work in a variety of facilities and agencies to provide education related to nutrition for the benefit of the health our citizens. We would like to support **House Bill 514 - Education - Maryland Meals for Achievement In-Classroom Breakfast Program - Annual Appropriation.**

The bill will Increase “the appropriation required by the Governor for the Maryland Meals for Achievement In-Classroom Breakfast Program from \$7,550,000 to \$12,050,000 in the annual budget bill.”

Food insecurity disrupts food intake or eating patterns due to a lack of money or resources. Food insecurity among children has been associated with adverse health, social, and academic outcomes. Consequently, in 2015, 16.6% of households with children were classified as food insecure (adults, children, or both) in 7.8 percent of all families with children (1). The incidence of food insecurity increased during the Covid pandemic by 18%. Child nutrition programs improve diet quality, and academic performance for low-income and food-insecure households.

School meal programs such as this and other child nutrition programs improve food security. They do so by augmenting overall household resources and providing children with a regular source of nutritious meals. Understanding the role that school meal programs play in the dietary adequacy of children at risk for food insecurity helps assess program effectiveness. (2)

The Maryland Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recognizes that many of the populations we serve are at risk for food insecurity. The Academy's policy recommendations for healthy food systems and access includes Food Security. Increasing access to affordable, healthy foods in communities and schools, helps to link healthy food to positive health outcomes.

For these reasons, we support the goals and aims of **House Bill 514** and ask for a FAVORABLE report.

Thank you for your consideration.

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References:

1. Katherine Ralston, Katie Treen, Alisha Coleman-Jensen, and Joanne Guthrie; Children's Food Security and USDA Child Nutrition Programs United States Department of Agriculture Summary https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/84003/eib-174_summary.pdf, Retrieved February 15, 2022
2. Wolfson JA, Leung CW. Food insecurity and COVID-19: disparities in early effects for U.S. adults. *Nutrients*. 2020;12(6):1648. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu12061648> Crossref, Google Scholar