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Written Testimony

**House Bill 452 - Food Supplement Benefits - Students - Eligibility
 (SNAP for Students)
 Appropriations Committee – February 21, 2023**

Support

Background: House Bill 452 would require the Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide food supplement benefits to students enrolled in an institution of higher education who are residents of the State; enrolled for at least 15 credit hours per year; and who meet a certain eligible income threshold.

Written Comments: The Baltimore Jewish Council represents The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore and all of its agencies. This includes Jewish Community Services (JCS), which provides a plethora of social services to low-income Marylanders.

It is scientifically proven that without proper nutrition, learning can be incredibly difficult. Currently, Maryland offers free and reduced meals to students in both primary and secondary education. HB452 would expand this access to students in higher education institutions who meet an eligible income threshold, showing our commitment to ALL students across the State of Maryland.

It is also important to note that college students are not just 17 – 22 years old. This is especially true at the sixteen community colleges in our state—they can be parents, veterans, individuals who return for second-career education, etc.

For these reasons, the Baltimore Jewish Councils asks for a favorable report on HB452.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.