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## MARYLAND ACADEMY OF NUTRITION AND DIETETICS



**Date:** January 26, 2023

**Bill:** House Bill 8- Counties and State Legislative Districts - Food Environment Reports

**Committee:** House Environment and Transportation Committee  
The Honorable Kumar Barve, Chair

**Position:** **Support**

The Maryland Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (MAND) represents nearly 1,200 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 support **House Bill 8 - Counties and State Legislative Districts - Food Environment Reports.**

Food insecurity is a term defined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that indicates that the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food, or the ability to acquire such food, is limited or uncertain for a household.[1] Food insecurity is measured by the level of food security: Very Low, Low, Marginal, and High. Measurement of food insecurity is generally obtained by self-reported surveys and indicates a household's level of anxiety over having enough food to eat, the change in diet and quality of food consumed, and the number of food patterns that have been disrupted [2].

The Maryland Hunger Profiles provide accurate local data on federal nutrition program participation, population, and poverty data for each of the 24 jurisdictions. Behind the percentages outlined in the Maryland Hunger Profiles are the tens of thousands of children, older adults, people living with disabilities, veterans, and low-wage earners who would not get the daily nutrition they need to be productive without these programs. Still, many nutrition programs have not yet realized their full capacity of service-for thousands of Marylanders [3].

This legislation will require the Departments of Housing and Community Development, Planning, Human Services, and Agriculture to jointly produce a report to the General Assembly for each county and State legislative district by July 1, 2024, and every 2 years subsequently. This bill will provide reporting of food insecurity zones and foster collaboration between universities, non-profit organizations and local planning and zoning departments. This will enable many stakeholders to work together to eliminate or reduce food insecurity in Maryland, while at the

same time providing a service to assist many Marylanders to overcome this overwhelming nutrition and public health concern.

We urge you to **Support House Bill 8** that will benefit the thousands of residents in Maryland that live in food insecurity zones. It will also allow various colleges, universities, and non-profit organizations as well as zoning departments to assist Marylanders if these reports are released and shared among organizations.

Thank you for your consideration.

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#### References

1. <https://www.mdhungersolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/2022-MD> retrieved Jan 20, 2023 .
2. United States Census Bureau (2020). QuickFacts Maryland, Median Household Income (in 2020 dollars), 2016-2020. Available at <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/map/MD/INC110220> .
3. United States Census Bureau (2020). American Community Survey, Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months, 2020: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables. Available at <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=poverty&g=0400000US24,24%240500000&tid=ACSST5Y2020.S1701>.