



**Olivia Bartlett, DoTheMostGood Maryland Team**

**Committee:** Finance

**Testimony on:** SB026 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program, Maryland Children’s Health Program, and Social Services Programs – Eligibility and Enrollment

**Position:** Favorable

**Hearing Date:** February 1, 2023

**Bill Contact:** Senator Malcolm Augustine

DoTheMostGood (DTMG) is a progressive grass-roots organization with members in all districts in Montgomery County as well as in several neighboring counties. DTMG supports legislation and activities that keep all Maryland residents healthy and safe in a clean environment and which promote equity across all our diverse communities. SB026 will support those goals by streamlining the process by which people sign up for safety-net services such as Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and fuel and utility energy assistance programs. By establishing categorical eligibility, one application process will allow an individual to enroll in all services.

SB026 would:

- Implement Express Lane Eligibility (ELE) to automatically grant Medicaid eligibility to children and adults who SNAP already has determined meet financial eligibility requirements.
- Streamline the process for receiving assistance by automatically enrolling someone for fuel and utility assistance if they qualify for SNAP, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or Means-Tested Veteran’s Affairs Benefits.
- Support seniors by automatically enrolling someone for SNAP if they qualify for SSI.
- Expand eligibility to participate in the electric universal service program to 200% of the FPL.

Thirty thousand SNAP households who claim a heating or cooling expense currently do not receive Energy Assistance. Sixty-five thousand people, or seventeen percent of those covered by SNAP, are not covered by Medicaid. Streamlining and creating one eligibility process will allow additional eligible families in Maryland to be served essential assistance with little to no administrative cost increases.

For all these reasons, DTMG strongly supports SB026 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

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