

Testimony in Opposition of HB 1434

Department of Human Services - Electronic Benefits Transfer Cards – Restoration of Benefits
Hearing of the House Appropriations Committee, March 5, 2024

Hello, my name is Joy, I have been a recipient for EBT for a couple years. I am currently a single mom and have a 7-year-old son. I'm enrolled in school and work part time. I was aware of the fraud that was going on, never did I think that it would happen to me. This year, 2024 I finally got hit with the fraud that was striking many Americans. I was very discouraged waking up to not having money in my account. I immediately called the EBT customer service and found out that the full amount was taken out at 6am in the morning all the way in Chicago. While the department moved fast and received my benefits back the next day, my card was cancelled, and I had to wait two weeks to receive a new one.

During that time of waiting, I had to depend on food pantries at various churches. While they are helpful, they do not provide full nutritional meals. Sometimes they would only have bread, fruit and vegetables. I did not have transportation, so it was hard to get around to try multiple food pantries. Two weeks was a struggle to put together enough to eat.

Even though it was just my one child and I, it made me think about the other families who have multiple children, and this has happened to. It is mind boggling that the department and government officials want to stop replacing benefits for families that this has happened to. There really isn't much security that has been put in place to stop this. Even investigations that have been done as to how it happened, nothing has changed. If this continues to happen and no benefits will be replaced, it will leave many families with food insecurity.

To all department and government officials, please consider how many lives are at stake. Some people already in America don't know when their next meal will come, and this would increase the famine that is already here and a lot of other countries.