



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB666**  
**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - State Supplement**  
**Testimony in SUPPORT**

Chair Barnes, Vice-Chair Chang, and the members of the House Appropriations Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide favorable consideration of House Bill 666.

The jointly federally and state-funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides critical support to address hunger and food insecurity across Maryland. Without these benefits, the over 700,000 Marylanders currently using SNAP benefits would be at a loss. During the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency allotments allowed the state to supplement the benefits received and significantly decrease food insecurity. However, now that the federal funds have ceased, the state has seen a \$70 million decrease in the SNAP program.

HB666 seeks to support struggling families by increasing the minimum benefit amount from \$23/month to \$95/month. As of December 2023, DHS estimates that 73,739 households received a SNAP benefit of less than \$95 per month.

The pandemic was a true testament to how essential and effective the SNAP program is in combating hunger. It showed us that SNAP benefits are a lifeline for millions of Marylanders. They don't just alleviate hunger, they provide a pathway to better health and wellbeing. By ensuring access to nutritious food, SNAP also helps improve educational outcomes for children, supports older adults, and aids families in crisis.

This program also has a significant impact on our economy. For each SNAP dollar spent, roughly \$1.50 is generated for the local community through local retailers, farmers' markets, and various other businesses. However, without the emergency allotment, our local communities have seen a loss of nearly \$1 billion.

Increasing the minimum allotment of SNAP will ensure that all Marylanders do not have to choose between feeding their families and other necessities. This bill serves as a recognition of the positive effects SNAP benefits have had on this state, and by increasing the SNAP minimums, we can ensure that it will help many more Marylanders as a tool against hunger.

**Thank you for your committee's consideration, and I respectfully request a favorable report on HB666.**