

SHANEKA HENSON
Legislative District 30A
Anne Arundel County

Ways and Means Committee

Joint Committee on
Children, Youth, and Families



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 543
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Seniors - State Supplement

Chair Ben Barnes
Vice Chair Mark S. Chang
Room 121
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairman Barnes and Members of the Appropriations Committee,

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 543, which would increase the minimum monthly SNAP benefit for seniors from \$40 to \$75.

As I have met and spoken with seniors across Maryland, I have heard loud and clear about the day-to-day struggle to afford basic necessities, especially food, on fixed incomes. Across the country, millions of seniors face economic hardship and struggle with poverty and hunger. According to the National Council on Aging, in 2022 over 6 million seniors, nearly 9%, lived below the poverty line. And 25% of all seniors are considered economically insecure, struggling to meet basic needs like food, housing, and healthcare.

Our older neighbors and family members should not have to choose between food, medicine, and paying utilities. The senior population is the backbone of families and communities in every corner of this state. They have contributed enormously over long careers and are deserving of our support and care in their later years. A supplement such as this shows our seniors they are valued and sends the message that we will be there for those who came before us.

Supporting this bill is simply the right thing to do. I urge your favorable report on this legislation that honors older Marylanders for their past contributions while easing the burden in their golden years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "SHANEKA HENSON".

Hon. Delegate Shaneka Henson

District 30A- Anne Arundel County