



"Cultivating a collaborative, sustainable, and equitable food system for all Maryland communities."

February 2, 2024
2024 SESSION SUPPORT TESTIMONY
HB 666: Department of Human Services
Supplemental SNAP Benefit

BILL: HB 666: Supplemental SNAP Benefit
COMMITTEE: House Appropriations Committee
POSITION: Testimony of Support of House Bill 66

Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record in support of House Bill 666.

This letter is submitted on behalf of the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council. The Food System Resiliency Council was established by the Maryland General Assembly during the 2021 legislative session to bring together 33 appointed council members from across the state, all with different points of entry and expertise to work toward a more resilient food system and address the food insecurity crisis due to COVID-19.

One of the key mandates of this Council is to develop equity and sustainability policy recommendations to increase the long-term resiliency of Maryland's food system.

One way this can be achieved is by ensuring that the SNAP (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program) benefit is sufficient to address the nutritional and economic needs of SNAP recipients. As the current federal minimum benefit is \$23 a month, and as thousands of Marylanders receive \$23 dollars a month, the FSRC wants to go on record supporting HB 666. The goal of this bill is to raise the minimum benefit to \$95 per month.

We know that our neighbors in New Jersey have also raised the minimum to \$95 per month, and our neighbors in the District of Columbia have instituted a raise of 10% for every SNAP household.

We believe that this benefit increase will not only help SNAP beneficiaries, but will infuse our entire food system, including retailers, farmers markets, producers and processors. It will benefit Maryland's Food System.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support of HB 666.

Michael J. Wilson

Co-Chair, Maryland Food System Resiliency Council