

MARYLAND RETAILERS ALLIANCE

The Voice of Retailing in Maryland



**HB407 Food Supplement Benefits - Students - Eligibility (SNAP for Students)
Appropriations Committee
March 12th, 2024**

Position: Favorable

Background: HB407 would extend SNAP benefits to certain college students in Maryland.

Comments: The Maryland Retailers Alliance strongly supports measures to increase or expand access to food benefits funding for Marylanders. During the COVID-19 pandemic, federal emergency measures extended access to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for college students in need. Now that the federal State of Emergency has come to an end, so has this important assistance access. Students who depended upon SNAP as the state faced record levels of inflation, and who are still contending with increased costs for housing, education, and everyday goods, have had those benefits stripped away with the failure of the legislature to pass this legislation during the 2023 Session. HB407 would restore those benefits with a mandated State allocation beginning in fiscal year 2027. These funds would flow directly into the local economy, benefiting both Marylanders in need and local business owners.

For these reasons, we would urge a favorable report on HB407. Thank you for your consideration.