

CORY V. McCRAY
Legislative District 45
Baltimore City

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Chair, Health and Human Services

Vice Chair, Capital Budget

Executive Nominations Committee

Legislative Policy Committee

Joint Committee on Gaming Oversight



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Vote Yes on Senate Bill 35

Bill Title: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – State Supplement
Hearing Date: January 17, 2024, Budget and Taxation

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to request your support for Senate Bill 35 (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – State Supplement). The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides benefits through Electronic Benefits Transfer or EBT cards to low-income individuals and families to buy groceries and healthy food options. Research shows individuals who receive SNAP fall into three categories: low-paid working families, older adults with low incomes, and people with disabilities living on fixed incomes.¹

SNAP benefits are critical for individuals who often deal with food insecurity. Food insecurity is an issue that affects millions of people in this country and across the state. The definition of food insecurity is when an individual or group needs more to eat and is unsure of where the next meal or food is coming from. SNAP has been identified as one of the ways to address the issue of food insecurity. Individuals and families who benefit from the SNAP program receive \$40 per month from the state. Senate Bill 35 would increase this amount to at least \$95 a month per individual and remove the minimum eligibility age for a person to receive SNAP benefits. Research links food security to economic well-being and cites inflation and rising food costs as the factors impacting food insecurity.² High living costs, expensive housing, unemployment, and low-wage jobs are identified as the root causes of food insecurity.

A recent report published by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities found a link between SNAP, improved health outcomes, and lower healthcare costs among program recipients. Research shows without food assistance programs such as SNAP, food insecurity would increase the risk of certain health-related illnesses – making it difficult for an individual to manage their condition. SNAP places additional money in the consumer's pocket, allowing them to purchase healthier food choices. This can ultimately lower the chance of the onset of certain health

¹ <https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/12-14-22fa.pdf>

² <https://www.feedingamerica.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/ElevatingVoicesExec.pdf>

conditions like diabetes and obesity. Both can be linked to poor food choices an individual might consider due to budget constraints.

Therefore, as the study shows, policies that expand program eligibility and increase SNAP benefits would further improve health and reduce healthcare costs, while policies that limit eligibility and cut benefits would harm health and raise healthcare costs.³

For these reasons, I hope you will consider the population that would desperately benefit from this program to ensure they are not forgotten and support Senate Bill 35.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cory V. McCray". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long horizontal stroke.

Cory V. McCray
45th District

³ <https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/12-14-22fa.pdf>