

**SB 722\_PJC\_Favorable\_BT.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ashley Black

Position: FAV



David Reische, Paralegal  
Public Justice Center  
201 North Charles Street, Suite 1200  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201  
410-625-9409, ext. 277  
[reisched@publicjustice.org](mailto:reisched@publicjustice.org)

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## SB 722

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Seniors – State Supplement  
Hearing of the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee  
February 21, 2024  
1:00 PM

## FAVORABLE

The Public Justice Center (PJC) is a not-for-profit civil rights and anti-poverty legal services organization which seeks to advance social justice, economic and racial equity, and fundamental human rights in Maryland. Our Health and Benefits Equity Project advocates to protect and expand access to healthcare and safety net services for Marylanders struggling to make ends meet. We support policies and practices that are designed to eliminate economic and racial inequities and enable every Marylander to attain their highest level of health. **PJC supports SB 722**, which would increase the amount of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefit that the State is required to provide for a household that includes an individual who is at least 62 years old from a minimum of \$40 to \$75.

**One in three seniors who qualify for SNAP benefits are still food insecure.** In Maryland, nearly 1 of every 4 (24.2%) seniors 65+ are likely to be eligible for SNAP benefits, as they have incomes at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).<sup>1</sup> Despite receiving this assistance, 33.89% of these qualifying seniors aged 50-59 face food insecurity.<sup>2</sup> For households that fall below 200% of the FPL, Maryland has the *nation's 7th highest food insecurity rate* among this age group and 8th highest food insecurity rate among those 60+ (18.69%).<sup>3</sup> In fact, the average Maryland SNAP benefit currently [lags behind the national average](#) (\$211 vs. \$239).<sup>4</sup> SB 722 would address hunger in seniors by increasing the minimum SNAP benefit, which has been proven to reduce food insecurity.

**Seniors face their own unique challenges in maintaining adequate nutrition.** [The CDC reports](#) that roughly one in five (19.3%) of seniors have special dietary needs, further increasing the cost and difficulty of getting

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<sup>1</sup> Maryland Hunger Solutions & AARP, *Senior Hunger in Maryland* (last visited February 16, 2024), [https://www.mdhungersolutions.org/pdf/Senior\\_hunger\\_fact\\_sheet\\_OFFICIAL.pdf](https://www.mdhungersolutions.org/pdf/Senior_hunger_fact_sheet_OFFICIAL.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, SNAP Household State Averages for SNAP Benefits FY2018, (last visited February 16, 2024), <https://www.fns.usda.gov/SNAP-household-state-averages>.

appropriate food.<sup>5</sup> Food insecure adults are 27% less likely to be in excellent or very good health, over 5 times more likely to suffer from depression, almost 2 times as likely to be diabetic, and more than twice as likely to have at least one ADL limitation.<sup>6</sup> Access to adequate nutrition is vital to the health of Maryland's senior citizens. **SB 722, if passed, would help improve the health outcomes of low-income seniors in Maryland and raise SNAP to a level for seniors that is more responsive to rising food costs and enable access to healthier food options.**

For these reasons, the Public Justice Center urges the committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report for **SB 722**. Thank you for your consideration of our testimony. If you have any questions, please contact David Reische at 410-625-9409 x 277 or [reisched@publicjustice.org](mailto:reisched@publicjustice.org).

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<sup>5</sup> CDC, *Special Diets Among Adults: United State, 2015-2018* (November 2020), <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db389.htm>.

<sup>6</sup> Maryland Hunger Solutions & AARP, *Senior Hunger in Maryland* (last visited February 16, 2024), [https://www.mdhungersolutions.org/pdf/Senior\\_hunger\\_fact\\_sheet\\_OFFICIAL.pdf](https://www.mdhungersolutions.org/pdf/Senior_hunger_fact_sheet_OFFICIAL.pdf).

**Testimony SB722\_FAV (2).pdf**

Uploaded by: Delegate Henson

Position: FAV

SHANEKA HENSON  
Legislative District 30A  
Anne Arundel County

Ways and Means Committee

Joint Committee on  
Children, Youth, and Families



The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 154  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3045 · 301-858-3045  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3045  
Shaneka.Henson@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 722**  
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Seniors - State Supplement

Chair Guy Guzzone  
Vice Chair Jim Rosapepe  
3 West  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Dear Chairman Guzzone and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,**

I am writing to voice my strong support for Senate Bill 722 and increasing monthly SNAP benefits for Maryland seniors. This critical legislation takes an important step toward ensuring older residents can afford essential needs.

Far too many senior citizens face impossible choices among basic necessities. According to Feeding America's 2021 report, over 5.3 million adults aged 60+ dealt with the threat of hunger nationwide. Over 2 million faced very low food security with reduced intake or disrupted eating patterns due to inadequate resources for food.

Meanwhile in Maryland, nearly 10% of seniors live in poverty based on 2020 census data. 30% rely solely on Social Security with an average monthly benefit around \$1,500, trying to cover rent, medications, transportation, and healthy food. We must do more to support these individuals who helped build our communities.

Increasing the minimum monthly SNAP benefit from \$40 to \$75 represents a practical, meaningful way we can ease daily financial pressures facing too many older Marylanders. I applaud Senator Benson for recognizing seniors' contributions and crafting a sensible solution. Passing SB 722 sends the unequivocal message that seniors are valued. I urge your favorable report.

Best regards,

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

Hon. Delegate Shaneka Henson  
District 30A- Anne Arundel County

# **School Construction - Public Charter School Facili**

Uploaded by: Destiny Bell

Position: FAV

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



James Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Room 221  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3165 · 301-858-3165  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3165  
Cory.McCray@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

## Vote Yes on SB 892

**Bill Title:** SB 892: School Construction - Public Charter School Facility Fund – Establishment

**Committee:** Budget and Tax

**Hearing:** February 21, 2024

Dear Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the committee,

I write to you today in support of SB 892. SB892 bill would permit the Governor to provide funding to public charter school for their facilities expenses up to \$2000 per student.

There is an inequity under current Maryland law when it comes to the funding of public school facilities. Charter schools in Maryland are public schools but they receive no public funding for their facilities, while traditional public schools have access to their local school system general funds and capital funding to pay for their facilities expenses. Public charter schools are required to divert their per pupil classroom dollars (or raise private funds) to pay for their facilities.

SB 892 would correct this inequity by giving public charter school students, families, teachers and staff the opportunity to have the same facility experience as their traditional public school peers who are attending 21<sup>st</sup> century schools in updated buildings and state of the art learning environments.

The bill does NOT mandate funding; rather, it says that the Governor MAY appropriate funds to reimburse public charter schools for their actual eligible expenses for facilities up to \$2000 per student. Eligible expenses is defined under the bill to include the regular ongoing expenses to provide and maintain a safe and appropriate school environment for learning, including things like rent and mortgage expenses, building repairs and maintenance, utilities, insurance, cleaning,

security, etc. It does not include costs that are not regular ongoing costs, like construction, renovations and buildouts.

The bill is a reimbursement model, meaning that the public charter school is required to apply for reimbursement to document their actual eligible facilities expenses in the prior year.

Maryland lags other states in not providing any facilities funding to public charter schools. 34 states and the District of Columbia provide direct funding for charter school facilities. For example, DC provides an allowance of \$3200 per pupil for facilities expenses.

Even though the bill makes the funding discretionary, passing the bill to authorize the funding and set up the structure for the program in the event it is funded would benefit Maryland because, as you will hear from the panel, it opens up the possibility for the State to receive federal grant funding.

For these reasons and those you will hear from the panel, I encourage the Committee to give SB 892 a favorable report.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cory V. McCray', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Cory V. McCray  
45<sup>th</sup> District



**Maryland Catholic Conference\_FAV\_SB722.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jenny Kraska

Position: FAV



**MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE**

**February 21, 2024**

**SB 722**

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Seniors – State Supplement**

**Senate Budget & Taxation Committee**

**Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) offers this testimony in support of Senate Bill 722. The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

Senate Bill 722 is legislation aimed at increasing the amount of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits provided to households that include individuals aged 62 and older. This initiative reflects our obligation to care for the most vulnerable members of our society and ensure that all individuals have access to the basic necessities of life, including nutritious food.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program plays a critical role in the lives of many of our senior citizens by providing vital assistance to low-income individuals and families who struggle to afford an adequate diet. However, many older adults face unique challenges that can exacerbate food insecurity, including fixed incomes, rising healthcare costs, and limited access to affordable and nutritious food options.

Increasing SNAP benefits for households with individuals aged 62 and older is a compassionate and just response to the needs of our elderly population. As they age, many older adults experience declining health, mobility limitations, and increased reliance on medications and medical care, all of which can place additional financial strain on already limited budgets. By providing additional assistance through SNAP, we can help alleviate the burden of food insecurity and ensure that older adults have access to the nourishment they need to maintain their health and well-being.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 722.



**SB 722\_Horizon Foundation\_fav.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kerry Darragh

Position: FAV



February 21, 2024

**COMMITTEE:** Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

**BILL:** SB 722 – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Seniors – State Supplement

**POSITION:** Support

The Horizon Foundation is the largest independent health philanthropy in Maryland. We are committed to a Howard County free from systemic inequities, where all people can live abundant and healthy lives.

**The Foundation is pleased to support SB 722 – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Seniors – State Supplement.** If individuals who are at least 62 years old on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program receive a federally funded benefit under \$75 per month, this bill would require the state to provide a supplement to increase the total benefit to \$75 per month, up from \$40.

Like other communities across the state, Howard County older adults and their families have felt the pain of rising food costs and an increasingly high cost of living. Though we are known as an affluent county, our lower- and middle-income families – particularly those of color – are at risk of, or are already experiencing, food insecurity. In fact, during the Foundation’s recent strategic planning and community engagement process, older adults with lower incomes reported that nutrition insecurity and affordability were among their top challenges to living in our community. SB 722 would give these residents a much-needed financial boost and help fight hunger and food insecurity in Howard County.

By reducing health inequities, we believe all people will be able to live abundant and healthy lives. To help achieve that vision, we must ensure that healthy food is accessible and affordable to everyone in our community.

For this reason, the Horizon Foundation **SUPPORTS SB 722** and urges a **FAVORABLE** report.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Lanlan Xu, Ph.D

**SB722\_MoCo\_Frey\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Leslie Frey

Position: FAV



# Montgomery County

## Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550

ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8270

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SB 722

DATE: February 21, 2024

SPONSOR: Senator Benson

ASSIGNED TO: Budget and Taxation

CONTACT PERSON: Leslie Frey

(leslie.frey@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: FAVORABLE

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### Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Seniors – State Supplement

Senate Bill 722 increases the amount of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefit that the State is required to provide for a household that includes an individual who is at least 62 years old from \$40 to \$75 per month.

A legislative priority of Montgomery County for the 2024 Session is to support legislation that aligns with the advocacy recommendations made in the Montgomery County Strategic Plan to End Childhood Hunger<sup>1</sup> including increasing food financial benefits.

While many families receive direct benefits (like SNAP or WIC), these benefits at current rates are often insufficient to cover their actual needs. According to the Food Research and Action Center, “the greatest shortcoming of SNAP is that benefits for most households are not enough to get through the entire month without hunger or being forced to sacrifice nutrition quality.” This is confirmed by the Montgomery County Resident Survey: the Survey found that, among respondents (n=1,315), 63% used both food assistance programs (e.g., food distribution and food benefit). For many residents, food benefits alone at current levels do not meet their needs.

Additionally, in Montgomery County, hunger is a buying power problem. Residents appreciate the assistance offered through community and school-based food distribution programs, yet they also shared concerns about the quality and cultural appropriateness of the products offered. Their preference (according to resident survey data) is to have increased food benefit amounts.

Senate Bill 722 would ensure that households with people over age 62 receive direct food benefits at an increased amount. Providing food insecure households with extra money to purchase the food they want from the local grocer they prefer is the most dignified, equitable, and efficient way to support them. Montgomery County respectfully urges the committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 722.

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<sup>11</sup> [https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ofsr/Resources/Files/StrategicPlan2023\\_rev9signed.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ofsr/Resources/Files/StrategicPlan2023_rev9signed.pdf)

**SB 722 SNAP Bill Testimony BD 022024.pdf**

Uploaded by: Robert Doyle

Position: FAV





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**Statement of the Maryland Federation of  
National Active and Retired Federal Employees  
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee Hearing, February 21, 2024  
On Senate Bill 722 – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Seniors –  
State Supplement**

**(Position – FAV)**

Good afternoon, Chair Guzzone and Vice-Chair Rosapepe and members of the Budget and Taxation Committee. My name is Robert M. Doyle and I am testifying on behalf of the State Legislative Committee of the Maryland Federation of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), representing approximately 317,000 federal annuitants and employees in Maryland. For the continuing benefit of our senior membership as well as all Maryland seniors, we support – and ask you for a favorable report on – Senate Bill 722 entitled Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – Seniors – State Supplement.

As we have heard, this Bill works as follows: for any household with at least one senior (a person over 62), their minimum SNAP benefit will be raised from \$40 to \$75.

SNAP is the federal government's largest program for fighting hunger and food insecurity. During the pandemic, Congress passed a coronavirus response law that temporarily increased the amount of financial assistance SNAP participants received -- the extra benefits were called Emergency Allotments or EAs. But in March 2023, a year ago, EAs ended and monthly SNAP benefits returned to prior levels based on the recipients' income and household size. The average recipient received \$90 less per month, and some larger households had benefits reduced by \$250 per month or more. But the minimum payment for an individual went from \$281 per month to \$23 per month.

Seniors were hit especially hard. According to a report from the Food Research and Action Center, the steepest cuts are felt by older adults who only qualify for the minimum SNAP benefit, the \$281 to \$23 fall-off. Research from AARP's Public Policy Institute, among households that participated in SNAP benefits, 8.7 million included at least one person age 50 or older. The sharp SNAP cuts and rising food prices from inflation were a one-two punch.

After the EAs ended, because of Maryland law, seniors in SNAP did at least receive the State minimum of \$40. From the Fiscal and Policy Note for SB 722, we know that between July and November 2023, there were approximately 29,368

average monthly recipients of the State supplemental SNAP benefit for households with a member who is at least age 62. An average monthly payment of \$15.30 was distributed to ensure these households received a total benefit of \$40 per month.

But we need to do better. We agree with organizations like Maryland Hunger Solutions that we need to take steps to reduce hunger and bolster the health and well-being of seniors, individuals and families across the state by boosting SNAP assistance to those who need it. The funds dispersed in SNAP are investments which persons spend in grocery stores and farmers markets and the like.

Beyond that, SNAP is of great help to those older Maryland seniors who sometimes have to choose between food and other essentials including expensive prescription drugs, utility bills and even rent.

NARFE support bills like this one that improve the quality of life for Maryland seniors so that they will stay in Maryland and can age in place with dignity and not leave for other states. Maryland NARFE asks respectfully for the Committee to give a favorable report to SB 722.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Robert M. Doyle  
Vice-Chair, State Legislative Committee  
MD Federation – NARFE  
4226 Carvel Lane  
Edgewater, MD 21037  
[Bdoyle47@verizon.net](mailto:Bdoyle47@verizon.net)

H (410) 798-0079

C/Text (301) 693-1774

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# **MSCAN SB722 SNAP Increase Support.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sarah Miicke

Position: FAV



# *Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network*

## **MSCAN**

*AARP Maryland*

*Alzheimer's  
Association,  
Maryland Chapters*

*Baltimore Jewish  
Council*

*Catholic Charities*

*Central Maryland  
Ecumenical Council*

*Church of the Brethren*

*Episcopal Diocese of  
Maryland*

*Housing Opportunities  
Commission of  
Montgomery County*

*Jewish Community  
Relations Council of  
Greater Washington*

*Lutheran Office on  
Public Policy in  
Maryland*

*Maryland Association of  
Area Agencies on Aging*

*Maryland Catholic  
Conference*

*Mental Health  
Association of Maryland*

*Mid-Atlantic LifeSpan*

*National Association of  
Social Workers,  
Maryland Chapter*

*Presbytery of Baltimore*

*The Coordinating  
Center*

*MSCAN Co-Chairs:  
Carol Lienhard  
Sarah Mücke  
410-542-4850*

## **Testimony in Support of SB722-Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - State Supplement**

### **Budget and Taxation Committee**

**February 21, 2024**

### **Support**

The Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network (MSCAN) is a statewide coalition of advocacy groups, service providers, faith-based and mission-driven organizations that supports policies that meet the housing, health and quality of care needs of Maryland's low and moderate-income seniors.

**MSCAN supports Senate Bill 722** which increases the minimum amount of the state SNAP benefit for households with a family member at least 62 years old from \$40 to \$75 a month.

**Many of our seniors are on fixed income and struggle with meeting their basic needs.** Nearly one in five low- income seniors in Maryland struggles with hunger, resulting in Maryland having the 8<sup>th</sup> highest food insecurity rate among low-income seniors. Low-income seniors rely on Maryland's safety-net programs – like SNAP – to supplement their household budgets and purchase the items they need to live a healthy life. Unfortunately, one in five seniors who apply for SNAP in Maryland receive the minimum benefit, an amount that is woefully inadequate for seniors to access proper nutrition.

**SB 722 will reduce hunger among all Marylanders by increasing the minimum benefit while also helping the economy.** Recipients spend their benefits on food in neighborhood grocery stores, farmers markets, and other local retailers. For every \$5 spent in SNAP benefits \$9 is generated in local economic activity, yielding a strong return on investment.

**For the reasons stated above, MSCAN urges a favorable report on SB 722.**

Thank you for your consideration.



## **Sponsor Testimony**

Uploaded by: Senator Benson Senator Benson

Position: FAV



**JOANNE C. BENSON**  
*Legislative District 24*  
Prince George's County

MAJORITY WHIP

Budget and Taxation Committee

Education, Business and  
Administration Subcommittee

Pensions Subcommittee

*Joint Committees*

Audit and Evaluation Committee

Children, Youth, and Families

Ending Homelessness

Fair Practices and  
State Personnel Oversight



James Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Room 201  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3148 · 301-858-3148  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3148  
Fax 410-841-3149 · 301-858-3149  
Joanne.Benson@senate.state.md.us

**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 722**  
**Budget and Taxation Committee**  
**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Seniors State Supplement**  
**Senator Joanne C. Benson**

Good Afternoon, Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chairman Rosapepe, and the esteemed committee.

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 722, which proposes to increase the minimum monthly SNAP benefit for seniors from \$40 to \$75. As I have met and spoken with seniors across Maryland, I have come to understand the challenges they face in affording necessities, particularly food, on fixed incomes. Across the nation, millions of seniors experience 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. Additionally, 25% of all seniors are considered economically insecure and struggle to meet basic needs such as food, housing, and healthcare.

Our older neighbors and family members should not have to choose between buying food, and medicine, and paying their 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. Increasing the SNAP benefit for seniors shows that we value them and that we will be there for those who came before us. Supporting this bill is the right thing to do.

I urge you to report favorably on this legislation SB722.

# **SB722 Written - Favorable 2024.pdf**

Uploaded by: Zoe Gallagher

Position: FAV



**Testimony to the Committee of Budget and Taxation**  
**SB722: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Seniors – State Supplement**  
**Position: Favorable**

February 21, 2024

Senator Guy Guzzone  
201 James Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Cc: Members, Budget and Taxation Committee

Economic Action Maryland (formerly the Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition) is a people-centered movement to expand economic rights, housing justice, and community reinvestment for working families, low-income communities, and communities of color. Economic Action Maryland provides direct assistance today while passing legislation and regulations to create systemic change in the future.

Economic Action Maryland supports SB722, which would establish an increased minimum benefit of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) funds to households with older adults over the age of 62 from \$40 a month to \$75 a month.

In the state of Maryland, a concerning statistic reveals that only 53% of eligible older adults over the age of 60 are participating in the SNAP program. This low amount of participation is encouraged further by the inadequate minimum monthly benefit of \$40 for households supporting older adults. This extremely low amount of support falls significantly short of meeting the basic nutritional needs of seniors, which has been linked to increased risks of health issues such as obesity, diabetes, and heightened hospitalization rates, all of which could be decreased with increased access to proper nutritional values.

Recognizing this, we believe that increasing the minimum benefit from \$40 to \$75 would not only encourage greater participation in the SNAP program but also alleviate the food insecurity faced by older adults, as well as contribute to the stimulation of local economies as recipients would have additional resources to spend on food and other necessities.

Supporting SB722 ensures that older adults facing food insecurity receive the nutrition and assistance they rightfully deserve. By increasing the minimum amount of SNAP assistance households with older adults receive, food insecurity and lack of SNAP participation among older adults would be decreased overall.

For these reasons we support SB722 and ask for a favorable response from the committee.

Sincerely,



Zoe Gallagher, Policy Associate

**SB722 - INFO - MD Hunger Solutions.docx.pdf**

Uploaded by: JD Robinson

Position: INFO



**INFORMATIONAL TESTIMONY ON SB 722**  
**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Seniors - State Supplement**  
**Senate Budget & Taxation Committee**  
**February 21, 2024**

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee,

SB 722 aims to provide additional state funding to the existing supplement for older adults on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). It would include additional funding to increase the existing \$40 SNAP minimum to \$75 a month while maintaining the age of eligibility for the supplement at 62 years old and older.

As a statewide, non-partisan, nonprofit working to end hunger in Maryland, Maryland Hunger Solutions strives to overcome existing barriers to state and federal nutrition assistance programs and create self-sustaining connections between Maryland residents and nutritious foods.

In 2015, Maryland Hunger Solutions championed legislation for the original SNAP supplement for older adults, from the then federal minimum of \$15 a month to \$30 a month. This was raised again in 2021 to \$40 a month, but at the time had minimal impact as the state was currently receiving the emergency allotments waiver that allowed for a boosted SNAP benefit to all eligible households.

Last year, SNAP lost a multitude of waivers and flexibilities that provided greater access to households to apply and maintain benefits, including Emergency Allotments. Under this waiver, a household of one received no less than \$281 a month. This ended in March 2023, with all households seeing a decrease in their monthly allotments with some falling to as little as \$23 a month, the federal minimum. This mostly impacted older adult households, as they have higher income limits for eligibility and often have higher incomes due to Social Security and pensions.

There is currently legislation being introduced this session to increase the minimum benefit for all Marylanders on SNAP to \$95 a month, HB666/SB35. This increase would not only assist older adult households, but working families and individuals who receive less than \$95 a month. This increase would be in step with New Jersey, who currently provides a \$95 a month minimum SNAP benefit as of March 2023.

Maryland Hunger Solutions appreciates the opportunity to inform the conversation around SB 722. We welcome the opportunity to work with legislators and the Department of Human Services to ensure that Marylanders have reliable access to healthy food year-round.