

# **Maryland Catholic Conference\_FAV\_SB213.pdf**

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**MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE**

**February 8, 2024**

**SB 213**

**Human Services – Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for Children Act)**

**Senate Finance Committee**

**Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) offers this testimony in support of Senate Bill 213. 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 213 provides additional, state-funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to families who both currently receive federal SNAP benefits and have a child or children under the age of nineteen still in the household. Currently, each household receives an additional benefit of \$30 per child per month during the summer months and an additional \$10 per child in December. This bill provides crucial funding for this effort, increasing the current minimum allocation of \$200,000 to \$5,000,000.

The Conference consistently supports legislation that upholds the needs of families, especially when the efforts are focused on alleviating the effects of poverty felt by the most vulnerable in our state. Senate Bill 213 provides modest monthly food benefit coverage during the times when a child is not in school, such as summer vacation and winter break. Often for families facing elevated levels of poverty, schools play an outsized role in providing healthy meals for children, and sometimes are the only meals that a child will get in a day. The parts of the year where not only are children not receiving meals at school but also families have additional mouths to feed are an enormous financial burden, and Senate Bill 213 aims to ease this struggle.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 213.

**SB 213\_Horizon Foundation\_fav.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kerry Darragh

Position: FAV



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February 8, 2024

**COMMITTEE:** Senate Finance Committee

**BILL:** SB 213 – Human Services – Food Supplement Program  
(Summer SNAP for Children Act)

**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 213 – Human Services – Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for Children Act).**

SB 213 would increase annual appropriations for the Summer Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Children to \$5 million from \$200,000. This translates to \$30 per month for each child in eligible households during the summer, and \$10 per child during the month of December.

This critical program works to address food insecurity during summer and winter school breaks when low-income children do not have access to free school meals. Children’s food insecurity has been a problem across the nation for many years but became a glaring crisis in the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic when schools – which are many students’ primary or only source of healthy food during the day – closed. Rightly so, the federal government granted waivers to schools to offer universal free school lunch to students through the pandemic, and communities across the nation, including Howard County, came together to try and fill the gaps to ensure children did not go hungry. Those pandemic-era waivers have expired, requiring families to qualify for these programs once again based on income.

Like other communities across the state, Howard County 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 students and their families are at risk of, or are

already experiencing, food insecurity. SB 213 would give these families a much-needed financial boost and ensure that students do not have to worry about whether they will have food to eat during the day when they are on break from school.

Providing healthy school meals has long been a priority for the Horizon Foundation. Years ago, we launched a pilot program with the Howard County Public School System to increase fruit and vegetable offerings and offer more nutritious meals at three elementary schools. That program is now standard in every Howard County school. Students of every age in Howard County and across Maryland deserve healthy food to eat and no child should ever go hungry just because school is on break. For this reason, the Horizon Foundation **SUPPORTS SB 213 and urges a FAVORABLE report.**

Thank you for your consideration.

**sb213- summer SNAP- FIN 2-8-2024.pdf**

Uploaded by: Lee Hudson

Position: FAV



**Delaware-Maryland Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

Testimony Prepared for the  
**Finance Committee**  
on  
**Senate Bill 213**  
February 8, 2024  
Position: **Favorable**

Madam Chair and members of the Committees, thank you for this opportunity to testify about nutrition and well-being for the children of our State. I am Lee Hudson, assistant to the bishop of the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, for public policy. We are a faith community in three judicatories scattered across our State.

Our community's work in policy advocacy began as a commitment to end hunger. That remains one of the principal goals of our work, nationally and internationally. It was advanced in 1999 with, "Economic Life," (ELCA, re: *the moral imperative to seek sufficient, sustainable livelihood for all*). We maintain a permanent institutional appeal to address, and advocate for, an end to hunger in the United States, and anywhere in the world where we are represented by constituent assemblies and service organizations.

Child hunger is something like a permanent public scandal in the United States. One of the social defects illuminated by Covid19 was a spike in malnourishment among children because of the loss of nutritional resources delivered through the public education system.

The federal extension of SNAP COVID-19 Administrative Flexibilities in 2021 had a beneficial effect on child health and wellness by ensuring more adequate nutrition for thousands of them.

Maryland has an opportunity to improve SNAP nutritional benefits for its children during the summer months when its schools are not available as platforms for child nutrition. **Senate Bill 213** would do that by adding in the months of June, July, and August to household benefit allowances (with a lesser amount for December).

Even in wealthy and progressive Maryland child hunger is still prevalent. Children have no agency over their economic circumstance and the perils of child malnourishment are social, not just individual. We are pleased, then, that this Departmental bill includes a budget mandate for funding additional household supplements. We, therefore, urge your favorable report.

Lee Hudson

# Montgomery County Community Action Board Testimony

Uploaded by: Leslie Frey

Position: FAV





**Montgomery County Community Action Board Testimony**  
**SB213 - Human Services – Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for Children Act)**  
**February 8, 2024**  
**SUPPORT**

TO: The Honorable Pamela Beidle Chair; The Honorable Katherine Klausmeier, Vice Chair; and Members of the Finance Committee  
FROM: Dr. Jeffery Johnson, Chair, Montgomery County Community Action Board

The Montgomery County Community Action Board (CAB), the County’s local, state, and federally designated anti-poverty group, is in full support of SB213 and asks the Committee for a favorable report. This bill would support the state’s supplement to SNAP for counties during the summer months and December when school is not in session, and would allocate \$5,000,000 for this important program.

As the governing body, along with the Head Start Parent Policy Council, of the Montgomery County Head Start Program that serves 648 low-income children and their families, we are well aware of the importance of school nutrition programs and recognize the role that school meals play in providing improved access to nutritious meals for low-income school children. Of note, over one-third of children in Montgomery County Public Schools are eligible for Free and Reduced Meals.<sup>1</sup> During school breaks, parents face a significant burden to provide an additional one or two meals a day for their children. When parents are not able to afford additional food, children go hungry.

Now that the increased SNAP benefits put in place during the pandemic have ended, supplements for households receiving SNAP would be crucial, especially as food costs have risen. Support for food and nutrition programs has been a longstanding priority for our board because food insecurity remains a serious challenge here in Montgomery County and across the state. The food insecurity rate in Maryland is 9%, meaning that 543,650 residents struggle with *a lack of consistent access to enough food for every person in a household to live an active, healthy life.*<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that food insecurity is compounded in areas like Montgomery County and so many parts of the state, where the cost of living is extremely high, and wages have not kept up. According to the Maryland Community Action Partnership’s most recent report, the Montgomery County Self-Sufficiency Standard for a household with two working adults, one preschooler, and one school-age child is now \$122,943, over four times the federal poverty level.<sup>3</sup>

We ask the Committee for a favorable report and ask that you consider other policies and funding opportunities to provide critical support to households receiving SNAP, especially those with young and school-aged children.

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/food-and-nutrition/about-us/#:~:text=Approximately%2035%25%20of%20MCPS%20students,gap%E2%80%9D%20when%20school%20is%20out.>

<sup>2</sup> <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2020/overall/maryland>

<sup>3</sup> <https://maryland-cap.org/the-maryland-2023-self-sufficiency-standard-calculator/>

**SB213M\_oCo\_Frey\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Leslie Frey

Position: FAV



# Montgomery County

## Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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**SB 213**

**DATE: February 8, 2024**

**SPONSOR: Chair, Finance Committee (By Request – Departmental – Department of Human Services)**

**ASSIGNED TO: Finance**

**CONTACT PERSON: Leslie Frey**

**([leslie.frey@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:leslie.frey@montgomerycountymd.gov))**

**POSITION: FAVORABLE**

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### **Human Services - Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for Children Act)**

In addition to technical and clarifying changes, Senate Bill 213 increases from \$200,000 to \$5 million the minimum amount the Governor must appropriate each year in the budget for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits for children in households that include an individual who receives a federally-funded benefit under the food supplement program.

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 213 would ensure that the Summer SNAP program benefit is funded at adequate levels to meet the needs of Maryland’s children. 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 213.

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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)

# **CIF Testimony Senate Bill 213 - Summer SNAP for Ch**

Uploaded by: Mitchell Glassman

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY OF THE CRITICAL ISSUES FORUM: ADVOCACY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE  
OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND  
ON FEBRUARY 8, 2024**

**BEFORE THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
ON SB 213  
HUMAN SERVICES – FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM  
(SUMMER SNAP FOR CHILDREN ACT)**

**SUPPORT**

Honorable Chair Senator Pamela Beidle, Vice-Chair Senator Katherine Klausmeier, and Members of the Committee:

The Critical Issues Forum: Advocacy for Social Justice ("CIF") was formed by a group of synagogues in Montgomery County, Maryland. It comprises Temple Beth Ami, Kol Shalom, and Adat Shalom and represents over 1,750 households and three denominations of Judaism: Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist. For the past several years, CIF has addressed food insecurity and gun violence issues in Maryland. CIF was actively involved in the legislative process that led to the enactment in 2019 of the Summer SNAP for Children Act (SB 218/HB 338)( Section 5-501-1 of the Annotated Code of Maryland).

The CIF supports the Maryland Department of Human Services' request to increase funding in the Summer SNAP for Children legislation, consistent with recent budget allocations. Maryland's Summer SNAP for Children is an innovative and efficient way to address the increase in hunger experienced by many low-income children during the summer when children lose access to school meals. By providing a modest benefit for food during the summer, Summer SNAP for Children will reduce hunger and allow school-aged children to have healthier diets.

Funding Summer SNAP for Children is the right thing to do. SNAP's impact on children lasts well beyond their childhood years, providing long-term benefits for health, education, and economic self-sufficiency.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, it will 1) benefit our children of all ages by having them healthier, 2) benefit school children by making them more prepared to learn in the fall, and 3) help Maryland by having a better-educated citizenry. Food insecurity is a real issue for children in Maryland. Food hardship experienced by Maryland families puts our children's physical, emotional, educational, and behavioral development at risk.

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<sup>1</sup> Fact Sheet: White House Report Highlights New Research on SNAP's Effectiveness and the Importance of Adequate Food Assistance, <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pressrelease/2015/wh-120815>

Last year, \$9.505 million was available for Summer SNAP based on \$5 million of state funds and \$4.5 million of county matches<sup>2</sup>. This assisted more than 91 thousand children in the 14 counties that participated in Summer SNAP out of the 24 counties in Maryland. In sum, \$5 million is consistent with what was appropriated in the last session and is clearly warranted this year to help children. As the State of Maryland has recognized for many years, SNAP is critical in addressing hunger and food insecurity in our community. However, the \$5 million request should not be considered a cap as this amount, while helpful to many children, is far short of the need to help the more than 160,000 children eligible to receive Summer SNAP in those fourteen jurisdictions. The Department of Human Services has stated, "a budget of \$15.9 million [ which would include the county match] would be required to serve all the children ages 5-18" in the 14 participating counties.<sup>3</sup>

Last but not least, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) notes that SNAP benefits not only help children but "also augment the incomes and spending of others (such as farmers, retailers, food processors, and food distributors, as well as their employees); this, in turn, has ripple effects for other parties."<sup>4</sup> It will increase Maryland's business economy because, as reported by the USDA, each \$1 in SNAP generates \$1.79 in local economic activity.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, with the State's \$5.0 million and the match by the counties of \$4.5 million (if similar to last year), Summer SNAP will provide direct food assistance of almost \$10 million and an economic multiplier of more than \$17 million to the State.

**The Critical Issues Forum: Advocacy for Social Justice of Montgomery County, Maryland, respectfully requests a favorable report of Senate Bill 213, Summer SNAP for Children Act.**

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<sup>2</sup> Report On Children Receiving Benefits Through The Summer SNAP For Children Act (Summer Portion), Maryland Department of Human Services, Completed pursuant to the 2023 Joint Chairmen's Report, page 144-145, November 15, 2023: [https://dlslibrary.state.md.us/publications/JCR/2023/2023\\_144-145\\_2023\(10\).pdf?emci=05617198-088c-ee11-8925-00224832e811&emdi=ea000000-0000-0000-0000-000000000001&ceid=](https://dlslibrary.state.md.us/publications/JCR/2023/2023_144-145_2023(10).pdf?emci=05617198-088c-ee11-8925-00224832e811&emdi=ea000000-0000-0000-0000-000000000001&ceid=)

<sup>3</sup> Id.

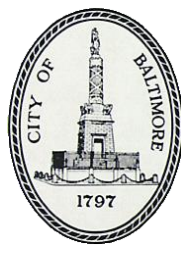
<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/economic-linkages/>

<sup>5</sup> Id.

**SB0213-FIN-SUPP.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nina Themelis

Position: FAV



**BRANDON M. SCOTT**  
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations  
88 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

**SB0213**

February 8, 2024

**TO:** Members of the Senate Finance Committee

**FROM:** Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

**RE:** Senate Bill 213 – Human Services - Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for Children Act)

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) supports Senate Bill (SB) 213.

SB 213 stipulates that families eligible for federal nutrition benefits who have children age 18 and under should receive supplemental funds during the months when their children are not in school (an additional \$30/month in the summer and \$10 in December). Many Baltimore City families rely on City Schools to ensure their children are getting the food they need, with 31,820 Baltimore children considered “food insecure,” meaning they do not have enough to eat and are uncertain where their next meal will come from.<sup>i</sup> The supplements provided by this bill would provide critical additional funds to Maryland families so they can buy healthy food.

More than 28% of Baltimore City children live in “healthy food priority areas” (previously referred to as “food deserts”).<sup>ii</sup> While the National School Lunch Program provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost, or free lunches each school day, families – especially those living in healthy food priority areas – struggle to find, much less afford, nutritious meals for their children when schools are not in session. When healthy options are not affordable, families have no choice but to rely on the less expensive food options available to them, which tend to be high in sodium, saturated fat, and sugar.<sup>iii</sup> This poor nutrition can lead to children being under or over-weight, both of which are highly associated with weaker immune systems and greater potential for poor health outcomes such as hypertension, diabetes, and asthma. Better nutrition would be a boon for Baltimore City children, one third of whom are either overweight or obese, and 20 percent of whom are diagnosed with asthma.<sup>iv,v</sup> Good nutrition is also associated with improved mood, better sleep, and even better brain functioning.<sup>vi</sup> Not only would this bill help families get enough to eat – it would help keep children healthier year-round.

For the above reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on SB 213.

<sup>i</sup> Feeding America. (2021). Food Insecurity among Child (<18 years) Population in Baltimore city County. Retrieved from <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2021/child/maryland/county/baltimore-city>

<sup>ii</sup> Baltimore City Department of Planning. (2018). Baltimore City's Food Environment Report: 2018. Retrieved from <https://clf.jhsph.edu/sites/default/files/2019-01/baltimore-city-food-environment-2018-report.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> Kern, D. M., Auchincloss, A. H., Stehr, M. F., Roux, A. V. D., Moore, L. V., Kanter, G. P., & Robinson, L. F. (2017). Neighborhood Prices of Healthier and Unhealthier Foods and Associations with Diet Quality: Evidence from the Multi-Ethnic Study of Atherosclerosis. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 14(11), 1394. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14111394>

<sup>iv</sup> Baltimore City Health Department. (n.d.). ReThinkYourDrink. Retrieved from <https://health.baltimorecity.gov/sugar-sweetened-beverages>

<sup>v</sup> The Abell Foundation. (2020). Pediatric Asthma. Retrieved from <https://abell.org/publication/pediatric-asthma/#:~:text=The%20report%20finds%20that%20an,asthma%20symptoms%20and%20improve%20their>

<sup>vi</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). Childhood Nutrition Facts. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/nutrition/facts.htm>



# **Agudah testimony - SB 213 - Summer SNAP - fav - 20**

Uploaded by: Rabbi Ariel Sadwin

Position: FAV



**SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**FEBRUARY 8, 2024**

**SENATE BILL 213**

**HUMAN SERVICES - FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM (SUMMER SNAP FOR CHILDREN ACT)**

**TESTIMONY OF RABBI AVI LENCZ  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, AGUDATH ISRAEL OF MARYLAND**

**SUPPORT**

Agudath Israel of Maryland speaks on behalf of the Orthodox Jewish communities across Maryland, and on behalf of the 10,000 students attending 30 Jewish day schools in our great state and their families.

Food insecurity has become increasingly salient in discussions regarding improving the lot of vulnerable Marylanders. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program has been a crucial lifeline to many families and individuals who struggle with the challenges of low income. During the summer months when schools are out and children are at home, the challenges of food insecurity can increase, and the Summer SNAP for Children program has successfully helped children and families deal with these challenges.

Senate Bill 213 will help the State to leverage federal dollars and optimize its efforts in combatting food insecurity, and bring State and federal disbursement periods together. The additional funding will help administrators eliminate barriers that currently make it harder for needy Marylanders to fully partake in the program. We respectfully request that you issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 213.

# **SB213 - Favorable (Final).docx.pdf**

Uploaded by: Riya Gupta

Position: FAV



**Testimony in support of  
Senate Bill 213: Human Services – Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for Children Act)**

**Finance Committee  
Position: Favorable  
February 8, 2024**

The Summer SNAP for Children Act passed in 2019 sought to expand the SNAP program for the summer months by providing an additional \$30 per child, monthly, from June to August. Alterations made to the original bill during the 2019 session reduced the proposed funding from \$2 million to \$200,000, limiting the program’s reach. This funding constraint inhibits the program’s ability to address childhood food insecurity, impacting children’s psychological wellbeing, physical health, and academic ability.

Strong Schools Maryland is a network of education advocates dedicated to ensuring the faithful implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future. The Blueprint guarantees a world class education for all students and commits our public school system to supporting the needs of the families they serve. Food security is a crucial component of a student’s ability to thrive and achieve. As such, **Strong Schools Maryland urges a favorable vote on Senate Bill 213.**

SB 213 increases the funding to \$5 million which would significantly increase the bandwidth of the program, allowing for more children to receive these supplements. With [485,181](#) Maryland students currently relying on free or reduced cost meals during the school year, this bill aims to better meet their needs in the summer. Not only does this bill show our commitment to our students, it also recognizes the departmental needs of the Summer SNAP program by adjusting organizational structures and mandating evaluations regarding the effectiveness of the program.

We implore this committee to build Maryland’s capacity to eliminate childhood food insecurity so that children can live to their fullest potential both in and outside of school.

**For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 213.**

*For more information, contact Riya Gupta at [riya@strongschoolsmaryland.org](mailto:riya@strongschoolsmaryland.org)*

## **02.07 - SB 213 - Human Services – Food Supplement**

Uploaded by: Tonaeya Moore

Position: FAV



**SB 213 - Human Services – Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for Children Act)**

**Finance Committee**

**February 8, 2024**

**SUPPORT**

Chair Beidle, Vice-Chair Klausmeier and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 213. This bill ensures children and their families who utilize SNAP benefits have reliable and year-round access to food.

The CASH Campaign of Maryland promotes economic advancement for low-to-moderate income individuals and families in Baltimore and across Maryland. CASH accomplishes its mission through operating a portfolio of direct service programs, building organizational and field capacity, and leading policy and advocacy initiatives to strengthen family economic stability. CASH and its partners across the state achieve this by providing free tax preparation services through the IRS program 'VITA', offering free financial education and coaching, and engaging in policy research and advocacy. **Almost 4,000 of CASH's tax preparation clients earn less than \$10,000 annually. More than half earn less than \$20,000.**

Prosperity Now's most recent scorecard for Maryland shows that at least one fifth of Marylanders struggle to pay for basic expenses, 20.2% of Maryland households experience income volatility, and 26.7% had difficulty paying for usual household expenses<sup>1</sup>. Programs like Summer SNAP are essential for low-income families with children to provide consistent access to food. The research demonstrates that access to Summer SNAP for children decreases the prevalence of severe food insecurity by one-third.

The Summer SNAP for Children Act passed by the General Assembly in 2019 ([HB 338/ SB 218](#)) helps low-income families who are food insecure to stay healthy and productive. Currently, the Governor must include at least \$200,000 in the annual budget for this program. SB 213 will increase that amount to \$5,000,000. This increase is necessary because it is unlikely that all eligible children in a county will be able to receive the supplemental benefit with the current appropriation. This means that counties will need to choose which families will receive the benefit.

We have seen that SNAP not only lifts low-income households out of poverty, but it also supports the local and national economy. According to a 2019 report from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, every \$1 in SNAP benefits can contribute to the Gross National Product by up to \$1.50<sup>2</sup>. This means that SB 213 would both further the economic well-being of individual Marylanders as well as the state GDP as a whole.

Enacting SB 213 would give counties the flexibility to provide summer SNAP for more low-income families that need it. It also gives the Department of Human Services more flexibility on when the benefit is given.

***Thus, we encourage you to return a favorable report for SB 213.***

<sup>1</sup> Prosperity Now Scorecard: <https://scorecard.prosperitynow.org/reports#report-state-profile/24>

<sup>2</sup> USDA: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2019/july/quantifying-the-impact-of-snap-benefits-on-the-u-s-economy-and-jobs/>

**SB0213 - FWA - DHS (FIN).pdf**

Uploaded by: Rafael López

Position: FWA

February 8, 2024

The Honorable Pamela Beidle, Chair  
Senate Finance Committee  
Miller Office Building, 3 East  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: TESTIMONY ON SB0213- HUMAN SERVICES - FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM  
(SUMMER SNAP FOR CHILDREN ACT) - POSITION: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) thanks the Committee for consideration of Senate Bill 0213 (SB0213). With offices in every one of Maryland's jurisdictions, DHS helps Marylanders in economic need, provides preventive services, and protects children and adults. The Family Investment Administration (FIA) within DHS administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) program which is impacted by SB0213.

Since the bill was enacted in 2019, Summer SNAP for Children has grown from serving 3,923 children in four jurisdictions to 90,571 children in fourteen jurisdictions in 2023. The proposed amendments to Human Service §5-501.1 seek to address certain timelines which do not align with the state's budgeting schedule and the federal SNAP program. The deadlines outlined in the Summer SNAP for Children Act bill present operational challenges to DHS to make sure we serve our customers more seamlessly.

The Act requires DHS to initiate the Summer SNAP application for local jurisdictions in December, which is before local program budgets are determined. Also, in its current form, the Act requires that Summer SNAP benefits be issued 15 days following the dates on which federal SNAP benefits are issued in June through August; and 7 days after the December issuance. In Maryland, SNAP benefits are issued monthly between the 4th and the 23rd, based on the first three letters of the recipient's last name. If DHS follows the schedule stipulated in the Act, some of the Summer SNAP benefits will not be issued in the designated month. This causes unnecessary and burdensome confusion for the customer and puts the agency at risk of audit findings.

We request the partnership of the Committee in amending 5-501.1(G) on page 4 of the bill to state that funding for Summer SNAP for Children is subject to limitations in the State budget, and may be used at the discretion of DHS. Amending 5-501.1(G) is necessary for the continued administration of Summer SNAP for Children. The amendments will build on the progress of the 2023 state Summer SNAP program which enabled local departments of social services to serve the children with the greatest food needs. The amendments give DHS the flexibility to align resources for the state Summer SNAP Program with the new federal Summer EBT Program allowing Maryland to maximize the federal funds to serve an estimated 500,000 school-age children's nutritional needs when they are out of school and unable to rely on free or reduced school meals beginning Summer 2024.





The Department's amendments make the following changes:

On page 2, strike beginning with "3." in line 25 down through "4." in line 29 and substitute "3."; and in line 31, strike "5." and substitute "4.".

On page 3, in line 11, after "plan" insert ", **COORDINATED WITH THE DEPARTMENT,**".

On page 4, strike in their entirety lines 26 through 28, inclusive, and substitute:

**"(G) SUBJECT TO THE STATE BUDGET, THE DEPARTMENT MAY USE THE FUNDING THE STATE IS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE UNDER SUBSECTION(B)(1) OF THIS SECTION TO:**

**(1) PROVIDE FUNDS TO A COUNTY TO SUPPLEMENT BENEFITS; AND**

**(2) OFFSET ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS OF THE FEDERAL SUMMER ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER PROGRAM."**

We appreciate the opportunity to submit SB0213 and the Department's amendments to the Committee for consideration during your deliberations. We look forward to working with you and welcome continued collaboration on SB0213.

If you require additional information, please contact Rachel Sledge, Director of Government Affairs, at [rachel.sledge@maryland.gov](mailto:rachel.sledge@maryland.gov).

In service,



Rafael López  
Secretary

**BaltimoreCounty\_FWA\_SB0213.pdf**

Uploaded by: Robert McCullough

Position: FWA



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.  
*County Executive*

JENNIFER AIOSA  
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**BILL NO.:**            **SB 213**

**TITLE:**                Human Services – Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for Children Act)

**SPONSOR:**           Chairwoman Beidle, on behalf of the Administration

**COMMITTEE:**        Finance

**POSITION:**           **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

**DATE:**                February 8, 2024

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS WITH AMENDMENTS** Senate Bill 213 – Human Services – Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for Children Act). This legislation would expand the State funding to Summer SNAP for Children from \$200,000 to \$5,000,000. Summer SNAP for Children is a key program for helping low-income families put food on the table for school-age children during the summer months, when they don't have access to school breakfast and lunch.

Every child deserves access to fresh, healthy foods. Baltimore County has taken steps year after year to ensure that the benefits from the Summer SNAP for Children reach as many children as possible. Summer SNAP for Children provides an additional \$30 in food support per eligible child during the summer months of June, July, and August, and \$10 over the winter break in December. Families already registered in the SNAP program do not need to take action to receive this benefit; monthly benefits for enrolled children between the ages of 7 and 18 will be automatically credited to users' EBT cards.

Baltimore County took initiative starting in the Summer of 2022 to expand the program using local funds; \$1,222,760 from Baltimore County combined with \$1,556,240 from the state provided supplemental benefits for nearly 28,000 eligible children. This level of commitment was continued for the Summer of 2023. A 2019 study by Towson University concluded that an increased state investment in Summer SNAP to \$2,000,000 would create a 13 percent increase in jobs and 7 percent increase in economic output. The expansion of funding to \$5,000,000 would create an even greater economic impact.

Due to changes in federal rules that allow states to participate in a federally funded Summer EBT program for school age children, Baltimore County recommends expanding the language in the bill to allow State funding to be used as part of the required match for Administrative costs associated with operating the Summer EBT program. The current bill language limits use of State funds to paying for “supplements” only. Under the federal program, all costs for the supplements themselves are paid from federal funds and States are only required to provide funding to match the Administrative costs for operating the program at a 50% match rate. The bill language should be expanded to allow for this use of State funds.

Accordingly, Baltimore County urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on SB 213. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at [jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov).

# **Susan Gross written testimony SB 213 Senate Financ**

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Position: INFO

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 213

Human Services – Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for Children Act)

Senate Finance Committee

February 7, 2024

### Susan M. Gross, PhD, MPH, RDN, LDN

My name is Dr. Susan Gross. I am a nutritionist and an associate practice professor at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. I am providing this testimony in regards to Senate Bill 213- Human Services – Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for Children Act), which increases the state budget mandate to Summer SNAP from \$200,000 to \$5 million. This legislation allows Maryland to meet the 50% federal administration match which is \$9 million.

According to the USDA Economic Research Service, 9.5% of households in Maryland experienced food insecurity (FI) between 2020 and 2022.<sup>1</sup> Although low-income families with children are partially protected from FI during the school year through the availability of free- and reduced-price meals (FARMS) provided by the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program, FI increases significantly during out-of-school times. Free meals are provided to children in low-income areas during the summer through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Participation in SFSP is much lower than participation in NSLP and SBP for a variety of reasons, including lack of transportation, limited meal site availability, low program awareness, and administrative burdens that limit SFSP sponsors' ability to serve meals.<sup>2</sup> Since 2018, I have been collaborating with Maryland Hunger Solutions (MDHS) to investigate the impact of changes in federal policies on food access during the summer for public school students in Maryland.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, flexibilities were introduced in SFSP, including allowing meals to be provided in a “non-congregate” manner and during more flexible time windows and allowing parents/guardians to pick up meals. The research team found that the COVID-19 flexibilities for SFSP were associated with a 200% increase in SFSP participation in Maryland.<sup>2-3</sup>

In addition to SFSP flexibilities, the introduction in March 2020 of Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) led to improved access to food during the summer months of 2021-2023 for over 400,000 children in Maryland.<sup>4</sup> During 2023, federal nutrition programs, including SFSP, underwent policy changes related to the end of the COVID-19 federal emergency and many of the COVID- related flexibilities in SFSP expired. The expiration of SFSP flexibilities resulted in few SFSP sites in Maryland and reduced meal participation due to lack of transportation, meal times restrictions and need for children to eat the meals at a congregate meal site, a barrier to food access for students not participating summer recreational and education programming.

In 2024, a new Summer EBT (S-EBT) program will permanently replace P-EBT. SEBT could reach at least 500,000 children. SEBT will be a step toward reducing food insecurity and increasing nutritional equity among children in MD during out of school time. Maryland has the opportunity to reduce food insecurity Maryland students during the summer and expand access to food through SB 213. However, more details about whether the \$5 million dollars will be used for administrative costs or funding of food assistance for students is still unclear to me.

*The opinions expressed herein are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Johns Hopkins University.*

Thank you for the opportunity to express my thoughts.

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<sup>1</sup> Rabbitt MP, et al. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. 2023. <https://doi.org/10.32747/2023.8134351.ers>

<sup>2</sup> Gross J, et al. Maryland Hunger Solutions Policy Brief. 2021. <https://www.mdhungersolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/SFSP-Waivers-Policy-Brief-August-2021.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Lu, S.V., et al. J School Health, 92: 429-435. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josh.13145>

<sup>4</sup> Maryland Department of Human Services. <https://news.dhs.maryland.gov/reports/that/usda-approval-maryland-provide-food-approximately-427000-children-affected-covid-19-school-closures/>