

Senator Beidle
Senate Finance Committee
In Support of: SB425

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TESTIMONY in SUPPORT – SB425 Summer SNAP for Children Act

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of SB425, The Summer SNAP for Children Act. My name is Ayesha Holmes, and I am the Director of No Kid Hungry Maryland.

Summer is the hungriest time of year for thousands of Maryland children. Each year, when school ends, families face the reality of finding ways to snip their budgets to ensure they have enough food to feed their children. They go without other necessities to ensure everyone can survive. We know that for many children school meals provide most of the food for their day. The Summer SNAP for Children Act has the potential to permanently change that unforgiving reality for approximately 500,000 children, by leveraging over \$60 Million in federal benefits for our kids.

Expanding Summer SNAP funding to \$5 million would enable the State of Maryland to take advantage of the USDA Summer EBT program and ultimately allow for DHS to reach over 500,000 school aged children with \$40/month in food benefits in the summer. What started in 2018 as a modest investment of \$200,000 in our children; Summer SNAP now has the potential to impact Half a Million kids facing hunger and poverty during the summer months.

By updating the Summer SNAP legislation, you have the opportunity to transform how children and families address their basic needs. With the new Summer SNAP, we can reach all the children who are struggling with hunger over the summer, instead of the lucky few.

Because of the required match, many jurisdictions cannot participate. With the USDA's SEBT they would not have to match, the children would access this benefit statewide based on need. Need in Maryland is determined three ways,

- (1) children eligible for and enrolled in the Free and Reduced Meals program,
- (2) children with Medicaid
- (3) children in a family that is receiving SNAP

This is an investment in our kids who need it most. We know that hunger does not go on summer break. It's a year-round, daily barrier for children to be healthy and thriving.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

No Kid Hungry Maryland encourages a Favorable Report.