



Maryland Higher Education Commission
Appropriations
House Bill 1090
Food Supplement Benefits - Students - Eligibility
February 18, 2025
1:00 PM
Favorable

Good afternoon Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang and committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of House Bill 1090. I am Dr. Emily Dow, Assistant Secretary for Academic Programs with the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). Let me begin by thanking Delegate Solomon for sponsoring House Bill 1090, which will address a growing crisis across the higher education landscape affecting Maryland students'...food insecurity.

MHEC fully supports House Bill 1090 - a critical change that would expand food access to students who are Maryland residents, enrolled at a college or university, and participate in a work study program for 20 hours a week. We applaud this initiative to streamline access to food supplement benefits to eligible students. As you know, college student demographics are changing. More and more students are independent or have families of their own.

Addressing food insecurity among college students is essential to ensuring their academic success and overall well-being. Many students struggle to afford nutritious meals, which can negatively impact their concentration, mental health, and ability to complete their education.

We can create a more equitable learning environment by prioritizing food security, where all students have the opportunity to thrive. MHEC is committed to meeting the challenges faced by students seeking to achieve their educational goals, and this is one area MHEC would like to see addressed.

In closing, MHEC fully supports House Bill 1090 and asks the Committee for a favorable report.