



February 17, 2025

2025 SESSION SUPPORT TESTIMONY  
SBo703: Family Investment Program and  
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance  
Program Benefits - Child Support

BILL: SBo703: Family Investment Program and Supplemental Nutrition  
Assistance Program Benefits - Child Support

COMMITTEE: Finance

POSITION: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 0703

BILL ANALYSIS: Requiring that all child support received in a month pass through to a family seeking assistance under the Family Investment Program and prohibiting the consideration of child support in computing the amount of assistance received; and prohibiting a local department of social services from considering any child support collected when computing the amount of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits to provide.

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

The Montgomery County Food Council (MCFC) urges you to SUPPORT the Family Investment Program and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Benefits - Child Support Bill (the “Bill”), particularly the portion that would remove child support payments from the calculation of SNAP benefits. This Bill is necessary to ensure that support intended for children is not offset by reductions in critical nutrition assistance.

As Maryland continues to recover from the lasting economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, rising food costs due to inflation have placed an even greater strain on families, particularly single-parent households. The USDA reported that in 2023, food insecurity rates were statistically higher than the national average for households led by a single parent. Additionally, the Capital Area Food Bank’s 2024 Hunger Report found that only 37% of food-insecure households have married adults, compared to 58% of food-secure households. Removing child support from SNAP calculations can help ensure these families have sufficient resources for food, rather than forcing them to choose between putting food on the table and meeting other essential expenses.



As a SNAP Outreach Community Based Organization authorized by the State of Maryland's Department of Human Services, MCFC has assisted thousands of Montgomery County residents attempting to navigate the SNAP enrollment process. In the past year, we have seen a consistently high number of individuals and families struggling because of rising food costs due to inflation and the end of COVID-era relief like the SNAP Emergency Allotments. The magnitude of these issues was documented in a recent report examining the Self-Sufficiency Standard in Montgomery County, i.e, the amount of income needed to support the basic needs of a family. This report found that a single parent with one preschool-aged child in Montgomery County needs to earn \$91,674 to cover the basic necessities of food, housing, child care, healthcare, and transportation without any financial assistance.<sup>1</sup>

MCFC regularly supports single working parents who, while ineligible for SNAP themselves, seek benefits for their SNAP-eligible children. Despite their employment, their earnings remain far below the \$91,000 needed to meet household costs in Montgomery County. Many of these families also face a **benefit cliff**, where receiving child support pushes them just over the income eligibility threshold for SNAP, resulting in a sudden and significant loss of assistance. In these cases, the reduction in benefits often outweighs the child support received, leaving families worse off financially. Furthermore, this situation may unintentionally discourage noncustodial parents from making child support payments in order to avoid loss of other benefits.

Excluding child support from SNAP calculations ensures that more funds remain available to meet children's essential needs, including food, housing, and healthcare. Additionally, removing these payments from income calculations simplifies the process for both recipients and administrators, reducing paperwork burdens and minimizing errors in benefit determinations.

Enacting this legislation is a necessary step towards alleviating poverty in Maryland and increasing access to healthy foods. It will support the self-sufficiency of Maryland families and alleviate the burden of community organizations trying to fill the safety net gaps. For these reasons, the Montgomery County Food Council supports Senate Bill 0703 and urges a FAVORABLE REPORT for this bill.

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<sup>1</sup> [The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Montgomery County, Maryland 2023](#), Prepared for the Montgomery County Community Action Agency by the University of Washington, September 2023.

*The Montgomery County Food Council is a nonprofit organization that serves as the primary connection point for businesses, nonprofits, government agencies, and residents around food system issues in our County. We bring together over 2,000 local and regional partners in community-wide education, advocacy, and capacity building initiatives. Our work cultivates a more resilient, sustainable, and equitable local food system by enhancing food access for the over 100,000 at risk for hunger, expanding food education opportunities for all residents, supporting our County's farms and food and beverage businesses, and addressing the impact of local food production, distribution, consumption and recycling on our natural resources*

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