



## MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair  
Delegate Anne R. Kaiser, Vice Chair  
Appropriations Committee Members  
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus  
DATE: 03/19/2026  
RE: HB1458 - State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program  
for Refugees and Asylees - Establishment

### **The MLLC supports HB1458 - State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Refugees and Asylees - Establishment**

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB1458.

Changes to federal eligibility requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) has created uncertainty for the refugee and asylee community in Maryland. By creating a state-funded supplemental program, this bill seeks to ensure continuity of food access for refugee and asylum households and other lawfully present noncitizens who were previously eligible for SNAP benefits. In FY 2024, the Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees (MORA) provided support and services to 10,620 Maryland refugees to ease their integration into American society<sup>1</sup>. These services are and continue to be integral to refugees and asylees adapting to U.S. society. Food security is a moral imperative and is vital for human survival. Further, immigrants are an integral part of the Maryland economy making up 21.7% of Maryland's workforce therefore continuing to support the adaptation of refugees and asylees to Maryland should be a priority<sup>2</sup>. The legislation will help prevent disruptions in food security among newly arrived and vulnerable immigrant populations in Maryland in the event of federal eligibility restrictions.

The federal changes embedded in H.R. 1 strike hardest at refugees and asylees in their earliest and most vulnerable months in this country, stripping food assistance from these individuals before they are even eligible to convert to lawful permanent resident status, a process that takes a minimum of 12 months for refugees and asylees alike.<sup>3</sup> Latino immigrants, many of whom have themselves navigated the complexities of resettlement and integration, understand that hunger is not a motivator but a barrier. It undermines employment, children's educational performance, and the physical and mental health outcomes that allow newcomers to contribute fully to our communities and our economy.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB1458.

<sup>1</sup> [MORA Fiscal Year 2024 At A Glance. Oct. 2023.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [American Immigration Council. Immigrants in Maryland.](#)

<sup>3</sup> [HR1 SNAP Impact on Marylanders](#)