



Testimony in Support of HB 903 - Income Tax – Subtraction Modification – Donations to Food Banks and Other Charitable Entities

House Ways and Means Committee

February 24, 2026

Dear Chair Wilkins, Vice-Chair Feldmark, and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

On behalf of the Anne Arundel County Food Bank, I strongly urge the Committee to vote favorably for HB 903, Income Tax – Subtraction Modification – Donations to Food Banks and Other Charitable Entities. If passed, HB 903 will establish an income tax subtraction modification for donations of food and monetary gifts designated for the purchase of food to qualified charitable entities that provide food at no charge to individuals in need.

The Anne Arundel County Food Bank (AACFB) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit established to alleviate food insecurity across our county, and we strongly support this legislation. Last fiscal year, AACFB distributed over 4.5 million pounds of food and essential supplies through our network of 76 partners. The demand for food continues to grow, exacerbated by rising living costs, benefit reductions, and persistent inequities in access to nutritious food.

Across Anne Arundel County, AACFB is experiencing sustained increases in demand for food assistance. An estimated 66,000 county residents are food-insecure, an increase of more than 11 percent over the past two years. Notably, this estimate predates recent reductions or losses in SNAP benefits and other safety-net programs, including Medicaid. Compared to the previous fiscal year, AACFB has served an average of 9 percent more households overall. However, the increase has been significantly sharper since recent SNAP changes took effect: from October through January, demand rose by 23 percent, underscoring the growing strain on local food assistance systems.

HB903 would establish a Maryland income tax subtraction modification of up to \$1,000 for donations of food or monetary gifts designated specifically for the purchase of food, when given to qualified charitable entities that provide food at no charge to individuals in need. This policy would meaningfully strengthen Maryland’s hunger relief infrastructure by encouraging private support to help food banks and pantries procure food.

Monetary donations designated for food purchases are especially critical for food banks and pantries. These funds allow organizations to:

- Purchase food when the donated supply is insufficient or unpredictable
- Fill gaps in availability, including fresh, culturally relevant, or diet-specific foods
- Expand programming and reach beyond what grants and other resources allow
- Respond more quickly to changes in community need

While federal nutrition programs and donated food remain essential, they are not sufficient on their own to meet demand, especially as many sources have been reduced or even eliminated. By incentivizing private food donations, HB903 helps shift some of the burden of addressing federal funding gaps away from the state and empowers everyday Marylanders to play a greater role in supporting food access in their communities. HB903 leverages a modest, targeted tax incentive to reduce the financial burden on donors and increase the resources available to organizations providing food at no charge to Marylanders in need.

Importantly, HB903 includes a sunset provision and reporting requirement, ensuring the General Assembly can evaluate its effectiveness and fiscal impact over time.



By strengthening private support for emergency food systems, HB 903 helps ensure that food banks and pantries can continue to serve families, seniors, and vulnerable individuals with dignity and consistency during these uncertain times. As such, the Anne Arundel County Food Bank urges a favorable report on HB 903.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leah Paley".

Leah Aiello Paley, LMSW
Chief Executive Officer
Anne Arundel County Food Bank