

Increase Access to SNAP: Implement Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility

Support HB1820 (Delegate Helmer)

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program (SNAP) is a federal food assistance program that helps low-income families put food on the table. Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) streamlines SNAP enrollment for all individuals receiving a TANF funded service.

The Problem:

43 states have implemented BBCE. Virginia is one of the seven who have not. As a result, Virginia is missing out on:

- Helping over 25,000 families put food on the table and
- Millions of federal dollars entering our economy.

Federal regulations allow for states to set SNAP eligibility levels between 130% and 200% of the Federal Poverty Line (FPL). Virginia is at the bare minimum of 130%. Currently, to qualify for SNAP in Virginia, an applicant must:

- Have a gross income that must fall within 130% of the FPL,
- Have net income fall within 100% of FPL, and
- Pass an asset test.

The Solution:

Increase the gross income eligibility level to 200% of the FPL and remove the asset test.

The Wins:

This will increase access to SNAP for more children.

- Children who are eligible for SNAP are then also eligible for free school meals.
- This will help reduce school meal debt, which is a growing issue in VA schools.

Increasing the number of SNAP recipients in Virginia will pump more money into local economies, helping smaller grocery stores.

- Every SNAP dollar will generate ~\$1.50 in economic activity. The state's investment in BBCE will result in an e \$10.5 million of economic activity.

Budget Request

- General Fund: \$281,292 / Non-General Fund: \$342,558

If funded, this budget amendment will help over 25,000 more families put food on the table and bring millions of dollars into the state.

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