



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 217		DATE: 3/1/2021
COMMITTEE: General Laws		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: ALISSA JOHNSON		PHONE NUMBER: 417-343-9262
REPRESENTING: CONCERNED WOMEN FOR AMERICA		TITLE: LEGISLATIVE LIAISON
ADDRESS: 3841 E LOMITA ST		
CITY: SPRINGFIELD	STATE: MO	ZIP: 65809
EMAIL: alissa73@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 2:31 PM

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I support HB 217 that requires recipients of the Missouri SNAP program, who do not have exemptions, to meet the same work requirements at the state level as those set at the federal level. State standards should not be less than federal standards. People have an inherent need for productivity in order to feel useful. When they do not have a standard or reason to work, because they are enabled by the government to not work, people lose their sense of purpose. People who use benefits such as SNAP too long, become so dependent on government to meet their needs, that they begin to expect more than what is reasonable from the government to live day to day. This isn't healthy for society. My personal opinion is that those who rely on government to meet their needs instead of their communities, do not feel a part of their community in the sense that they can get help from people who live among them, which is important to maintain healthy relationships among community members and to feel invested in the care and success of that community. I remember a time when my own family needed assistance through food stamps when I was a child and my parents divorced. My mother needed the help of the government to provide for three kids. When I spoke with her today about that she said that she appreciated that help, but did not want to have that help any longer than what was necessary. She worked full time and was glad to be able to provide for her kids without government intervention. Sometimes I wonder if people today have changed how they view government assistance. We should make every effort to reduce abuse of that assistance. There's a time and a circumstance for government to assist those in need, but that should come with the expectation that it is temporary for those who are able-bodied. This is common sense legislation and should be passed



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JAMES HARRIS		PHONE NUMBER: 573-761-7875	
REPRESENTING: OPPORTUNITY SOLUTIONS PROJECT		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 122 EAST HIGH STREET, SUITE 200			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AMY BLANSIT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: amyblansit@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 9:17 AM
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I oppose the restrictions added to individuals accessing food stamps.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: AMY KUP HAMMERMAN		PHONE NUMBER: 314-494-5420	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN ST. LOUIS		TITLE: STATE POLICY ADVOCACY CHAIR	
ADDRESS: 16 WEST LADUE ESTATES DRIVE			
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63141
EMAIL: akuo.hammerman@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 9:45 AM	
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Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Amy Kuo Hammerman and I am submitting this testimony in opposition of HB 217 on behalf of the National Council of Jewish Women St. Louis (NCJWSTL). NCJWSTL is a non-profit organization in metropolitan St. Louis, representing over 5,000 members and supporters throughout the state. We focus our work on community service, advocacy, education and philanthropy to improve the quality of life for women, children and families while supporting individual and civil rights, and have been doing so since 1895. HB 217 seems unnecessarily cruel as we slowly emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. Imposing work requirements at a time when the unemployment rate is high doesn't make sense. Work requirements just don't end up saving states much money and people qualify for an exemption. However, enforcing work requirements is a HUGE and COSTLY burden for the state, something Missouri does not need right now. In addition, food is a basic need and the legislature should not be imposing barriers to food access. Taking away a family's SNAP benefit hurts kids. Legislators often think that families don't need SNAP because they can get food at food pantries. However, food pantries are running low on supplies because of the extra need the pandemic has caused. Currently, one out of six Missourians in rural Missouri and one out of eight urban Missourians presently rely on SNAP. And if this bill is passed, it will have long-lasting negative implications long after the pandemic is over. NCJWSTL encourages you to vote no on HB 217.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. AC "HONESEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC AD		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: arniedienoff@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 5:05 PM	
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I am Opposed to the Bill.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: CHRISTINE WOODY		PHONE NUMBER: 314-503-7277	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: EMPOWER MISSOURI		TITLE: COORDINATOR	
ADDRESS: 308 E. HIGH ST. STE. 100			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: christine@empowermissouri.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 8:07 AM	

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Date: **March 1, 2021**To: **Chairman Trent and Members of the House General Laws Committee**From: **Christine Woody, Empower Missouri**RE: **Our opposition to HB 217**

On behalf of our staff, board, and the Food Security Coalition convened by Empower Missouri, I stand in strong opposition HB 217. Empower Missouri believes this proposal creates unnecessary red tape to make it harder for families to utilize the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP; also known as Food Stamps). Over 700,000 Missourians pay for their groceries and afford a nutritionally adequate diet through the SNAP program annually, and this bill constitutes a significant threat to the health and well-being of those families. 1. This body has an ethical responsibility to understand the financial scope of the bills they pass, and should require a thorough fiscal note. The fiscal note on this bill is woefully inadequate. The federal government puts special requirements on states who implement work hour tracking on families with dependents. In addition to providing job training and placement services, transportation and childcare support are required. The fiscal note does not adequately explain these costs, which are likely to be significant. We can benefit from states similar to ours who have more closely examined these policies, such as Wisconsin. In 2017, they estimated the increased costs to be over \$27M annually. Wisconsin’s legislature rightly decided that they could not afford to implement work hour tracking-- neither can Missouri. In addition to required additional supports, there will be increased costs for oversight of the program, including reviewing submitted tracking paperwork, screening applications for exemptions and hearing appeals from those mistakenly terminated. The fiscal note from 2021 makes no estimate to how many families will be impacted by this legislation nor how many estimated appeal hearings may be required. The 2020 fiscal note on a similar bill estimates 1,707 hearings would be required from people who are removed from benefits in error. This is where the FSD requested three additional FTEs to manage this increase, noted in the 2021 fiscal note. “Oversight notes that, in response to similar legislation from the previous session (SB 611), officials from DSS, Division of Legal Services (DLS) requested three additional FTEs, but did not request any additional FTEs in response to this proposal.” This body is familiar with funding levels at the Department of Social Services. Funding in the Family Support Division has not been increased in the past year to a level where they can now absorb the costs of the increased oversight in this bill compared to 2020 with no additional staff time. Even while ignoring these significant costs, the fiscal note does point out that these requirements will only negatively impact state resources. In fact, it estimates that it may increase the demand for federal resources as well. In addition, it acknowledges that it will have a ripple effect, impacting those grocers who accept SNAP. In 2018, \$1.06B was issued in SNAP funds to Missouri families and spent in grocery stores across the state. That year, the Department of Social Services estimated that the state would lose \$50M in federal funds for SNAP benefits that are spent with retailers in our communities. Despite its

inadequacy, the fiscal note still offers no fiduciary reason to pass this bill. 2. HB 217 is a solution to a problem that doesn't exist, and it is particularly tough for families during a pandemic. HB 217 and other similar bills previously filed seem to make assumptions that SNAP participants are lazy and abusing the social safety net. The frontline service providers in our coalition will tell you that this couldn't be further from the truth. There is data that shows that more than 80 percent of SNAP participants are working in the year before or after receiving SNAP, which is evidence that SNAP is an important safety net program that supports families who have hit hard times. During a global pandemic, families are struggling more than ever as many businesses and industries have been crippled in support of public safety. Our frontline workers will tell you that families struggling with food insecurity desperately want to work and to provide for their families. Unfortunately, circumstances surrounding low-wage employment have never been more difficult. In some industries, employment opportunities are extremely limited. In other industries, employment may be very unsafe with high exposure to COVID-19. If an individual or someone in their family are in a high-risk category for COVID, they face an impossible choice--take a job to meet work requirements and risk significant exposure for their family, or keep their family safe by taking longer to find safe, stable employment, but lose critical access to food via SNAP in the process. 3. Missouri's children should be supported so they can thrive.

According to the 2020 Missouri Poverty Report, about 216,000 children in Missouri live in poverty. The fiscal note for similar legislation filed in 2018 estimated that 30,830 households with 48,541 children would lose SNAP benefits for up to six months. Children should not be penalized for any actions of adults. Adequate nutrition helps the brains and bodies of these developing kids. In addition, nutrition is key in school success and long-term outcomes. This bill will increase childhood hunger in our state. 4.

SNAP access is linked with reduced healthcare costs. On average, low-income adults incur 25% lower medical care costs than those who don't participate in SNAP. During a global pandemic, SNAP helps to keep individuals and families healthy so that they are not trying to access care in overcrowded doctor's offices, urgent care clinics, and hospitals. 5. There is no evidence to support the success of this type of work tracking requirements, and there is no evidence to support the idea that Missouri has the infrastructure to support this type of programming. Missouri has already applied a work hour tracking program similar to this to workers without dependents. There has been no review done by our state to understand the long term impacts of this program. This means we cannot speak to its benefits or drawbacks. We should not implement a program which we know will harm children without fully understanding its impact to the adults in our communities. In addition, DSS has previously claimed that third party entities (i.e. community-based organizations) will provide all of the employment and training services for more than 44,000 additional families who will be subject to this requirement. There is no evidence that the infrastructure exists within the nonprofit sector and private sector to provide this level of training in all counties and communities where SNAP recipients reside. In addition, there is no evidence that the current Employment & Training programs are successful at helping people attain well-paying jobs. Empower Missouri joins multiple other organizations in urging a no vote on HB 217 today. We have a coalition of over 100 organizations statewide who will work diligently to oppose the passage of HB 217. We would welcome the chance to meet with any members of the committee to discuss further.



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: CRAIG STEVENSON		PHONE NUMBER: 573-397-1274	
REPRESENTING: KIDS WIN MISSOURI		TITLE: DIRECTOR OF POLICY & ADVOCACY	
ADDRESS: 3250 E HIGHWAY 124			
CITY: HALLSVILLE		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65255
EMAIL: cstevenson@kidswinmissouri.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 9:13 AM	
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We urge close examination to the impacts of possibly disqualifying entire households from receiving SNAP benefits. In Missouri, 72% of SNAP participants are families with children. The possibility of disqualifying an entire household would have unintended implications for the education of our children, including some of the more than 100,000 children annually who benefit from SNAP. SNAP's positive impacts on children can last a lifetime. Research shows that adults who received food stamps as young children are more likely to graduate from high school and less likely to suffer long-term health problems like obesity and heart disease. We also encourage the Committee to look closely at possible consequences of increased disqualification periods. Putting additional restrictions and requirements on the program threatens families' economic security and health. The federal government already has disqualification periods for SNAP participants. Increasing these disqualification periods and adding this new layer of tracking requirements would grow government involvement in the 1 in 8 Missourians who receive SNAP benefits and could create unstable homes for children. Children thrive when they live in safe and stable homes where their basic needs are met. While considering changes to how the SNAP program is being implemented by the state and utilized by families, we believe that the Committee should consider including ideas such as: (1) safeguards for families with children such as ensuring if parent's hours are cut unwillingly, that they do not see a subsequent loss of SNAP benefits, and (2) prioritize additional resources and private-public partnerships to ensure that parents have opportunities to adequately move from needing to utilize this safety net program to sustaining their family without the need of government assistance. Thank you for your time and attention. Craig Stevenson



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: D. SCOTT PENMAN		PHONE NUMBER: 314-690-6772
REPRESENTING: OPERATION FOOD SEARCH		TITLE:
ADDRESS: PO BOX 684		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY	STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: scott@penman.group	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 8:01 AM

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Dear Chairman Trent and Members of the Committee, Operation Food Search is a non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring children and families in Missouri have the nutrition, food, and skills they need to live a healthy life. We respectfully ask you to oppose HB 217 because of the impact it will have on vulnerable children and their families in Missouri. Unfortunately, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated economic hardship and increased food insecurity for many families in Missouri. According to Feeding America, 1 in 4 children in Missouri are now experiencing food insecurity, a leap from 1 in 7 reported prior to the pandemic. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is essential to helping low-income families put food on the table. Research also indicates links between SNAP participation and increased food security, better academic performance, and better health outcomes for children. Not only is Operation Food Search concerned HB 217 will increase hunger in our state, we're also concerned about the impact this legislation may have on school meals. The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) allows eligible schools to serve meals at no cost to all students without collecting household applications, which saves schools time and resources by streamlining administrative requirements. Rather than collecting individual applications, schools that adopt CEP directly certify eligible students for free breakfast and lunch using SNAP and TANF rosters. Many schools in Missouri with a high number of low-income children have opted to use CEP. Removing families from SNAP permanently, or for long periods of time, will endanger schools' ability to qualify for CEP. According to research, CEP significantly increases student participation in the school breakfast and lunch programs, which means more students are getting the nutrition they need to succeed. As an organization, Operation Food Search is committed to ensuring all Missouri children and their families have access to the food resources they need to live a healthy life, but we cannot succeed by charity alone. SNAP, as well as school meals, are vital programs, particularly for low-income children and families. To protect and nourish Missouri children, we respectfully request your "no" vote on HB 217. Sincerely, Sarah Ritter Manager of Public Policy



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: DAN KENT DEPLOIS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: ddeplois36@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 1:45 PM
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: EMILY VAN SCHENKHOF		PHONE NUMBER: 573-826-0031	
REPRESENTING: CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1641			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65102
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: GARRETT WEBB		PHONE NUMBER: 219-229-1104	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI CHAPTER, AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS		TITLE: REGISTERED LOBBYIST	
ADDRESS: 710A SOULARD STREET			
CITY: SAINT LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63104
EMAIL: webb@coestrategies.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 9:29 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JENNIFER CARTER DOCHLER		PHONE NUMBER: 573-356-4109	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE (MCADSV)		TITLE: PUBLIC POLICY DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 217 OSCAR DRIVE, SUITE A			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: jennc@mocadsv.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 5:52 PM	
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MCADSV Priority Legislation for 2021: HB 217The Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (MCADSV) unites Missourians with a shared value that rape and abuse must end, and advances this through education, alliance, research and public policy. MCADSV is a statewide membership association comprised of approximately 120 domestic violence and sexual assault agencies. MCADSV opposes HB 217. The unintended consequences of HB 217 could be devastating for a domestic violence or sexual assault victim who already struggles to access safety and stability, and consequently would be unable to meet enhanced SNAP work requirements. For those victims who need public assistance, it is the difference between surviving and not surviving. In short: nothing good can come from denying food to Missourians who are in need of help. In 2019: • 9,057 individuals received services from a Missouri sexual assault program. This number does not include the 5,496 individuals who requested services yet were unmet because the program lacked the resources to meet the need. • 36,304 individuals received services from a Missouri domestic violence program. This number does not include the 26,068 individuals who requested services yet were unmet because the program lacked the resources to meet the need. According to *The Difference Between Surviving and Not Surviving: Public Benefits Programs and Domestic and Sexual Violence Victims' Economic Security*: • Nearly 80% of respondents report that most domestic violence victims rely on SNAP to help address their basic needs and to establish safety and stability. • 55% of respondents report that most sexual assault victims need SNAP to establish safety and stability. • Benefits programs such as TANF and SNAP constitute a vital safety net for victims who, trauma notwithstanding, already struggle to meet their basic needs and/or support their dependents and families. Although MCADSV staff are not there in-person, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions.



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JEREMY LAFAVER		PHONE NUMBER: 816-654-3666	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI BUDGET PROJECT		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 7200 MADISON			
CITY: KANSAS CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 64114
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JEREMY LAFAVER		PHONE NUMBER:	
REPRESENTING: EMPOWER MISSOURI		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 7200 MADISON			
CITY: KANSAS CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 64114
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JESSICA PETRIE		PHONE NUMBER: 573-635-6092	
REPRESENTING: FEEDING MISSOURI, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS-MISSOURI CHAPTER		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 1805			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65102
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JOYCE ROGERS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: LDRJR16@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 5:55 PM
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I was one of those hungry kids that HB217 would make hungrier. Many times my mother couldn't find work paying enough to keep food on the table for two active kids after my father died. Do you really want thousands of kids to go hungry? I experienced that & can't support anyone who would.



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: KATHRYN GAMBLE		PHONE NUMBER: 573-634-4876
REPRESENTING: HEALTH FORWARD FOUNDATION		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 213 E CAPITOL AVE		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: katie@molobby.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 1:05 PM

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Health Forward Foundation opposes HB 217's modification of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) that would impose lengthy disqualification periods on recipients who do not meet the work requirements. SNAP provides sustenance for many Missouri families including children, seniors, and people with diverse abilities. During this public health crisis, it has become increasingly difficult for many people, including SNAP participants, to find employment or participate in training programs due to businesses closing, funding shortages and increased demand for training programs – all in addition to many families having to spend more time at home because of limited child care and public transportation options. Adding lengthy disqualification periods to the program would put yet another strain on Missouri families during what is already a challenging and life-threatening time.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: LAURIE BRICKEY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: lvbrickey@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 7:01 PM
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Adding more layers of red tape to this program hurts our most vulnerable; children and elderly. If people need a hand, they shouldn't be humiliated or made to fill out more paper work. Government exists to help people,



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LEAH MOSER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: lbraxton22@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 12:17 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I write today in opposition of HB 217 Bill- Nutrition Assistance. Research supports that work requirements target people who are actually eligible for exemptions. Therefore creating and enforcing work requirements does not save much money and creates an undue burden on people who are living in poverty to now jump through another hoop to get approved for an exemption. Also, imposing work requirements in the middle of a pandemic when people already struggle to find jobs does not make sense. Building an system to create and enforce work requirements is costly to taxpayers and there are more pressing issues that deserve our time and energy- like implementing an effective system to vaccinate Missourian's against COVID-19. Food is a basic human right and we should not be requiring struggling Missourian's to jump through hoops to prove whether they are worthy enough to access food for themselves and their families. To truly impact the health and wellbeing of Missourian's, we need to invest in systems that create access for people who need support rather than investing in systems designed to discriminate and keep people in poverty.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 217		DATE: 3/1/2021	
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: LUKE BARBER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: luke.t.barber@mail.umsl.edu		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 10:15 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am a person with Autism. I received food stamps till June 2020 and became ineligible through getting a better job through services through Vocational Rehabilitation as well as other disability service agencies. My income in June of 2020 was above the Federal income requirements which at the time was 13,500 Gross. I received \$195/ a month during that one year period that I was eligible for SNAP. In fact in 2014 during my senior year of high school ... People with disabilities were told " You'd never get a job" and many more that we never would be able to do. In the summer of 2014 I worked a seasonal job but decided that job wasn't a match for me . It wasn't until December of 2016 that I got my next job in Grocery and it wasn't until June 2020 that I started to work for Easterseals Midwest. I currently am working two jobs and work 35 hrs per week however the income from the two jobs is about 1400 per month or about 17,000 per year. Had these work requirements been in place with teeth, I would have been denied the help I needed at that time . luckily at the time it was not very strict and my caseworker or psychiatrist could fill out a form and get extensions and waivers to them , but I wondered what would have happened had that not been the case. I was improperly removed from Medicaid a year ago due to a Computer glitch. The state computer system used Fortran and it would not cross reference other Federal programs. As a result when it was acknowledged that I had other Auto Eligibility criteria it took the state some time to reinstate me to the levels in bad previously .Work requirements like these are meant for one thing to remove the social services people need because the income and asset limits are too low. If we want people to work we need to make people see that you can't survive purely on the safety net but that's just it it's a safety net so while you work and make money it prevents you from falling into poverty or homelessness. We also must help people find and keep a job, people might not know interview skills or what a uniform is or other job and professional skills that you learn with your first job. Without some of the training and guidance I would be on Social security disability but instead am on Medicaid only. I say these things not to tokenize my experience but so that you see the experience of real Missourians who have been impacted by these programs.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: MAURA GRAY		PHONE NUMBER: 314-596-1418	
REPRESENTING: AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION		TITLE: MISSOURI GOVERNMENT RELATIONS DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 460 N LINDBERGH			
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63141
EMAIL: maura.gray@heart.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/26/2021 3:53 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

On behalf of the American Heart Association (AHA), I urge your opposition to HB 217 – requiring individuals participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to comply with work requirements. Across Missouri, many families and individuals are struggling with food insecurity in an unprecedented environment – additional barriers increase these difficulties and further health inequity in our state. The majority of SNAP recipients are children and elderly or disabled adults. And more than half of all SNAP benefits go to households with gross incomes less than or equal to half of the poverty line. Protecting access without implementing obstacles and providing SNAP incentives among these vulnerable communities is key to making a healthy diet more affordable. In addition, SNAP is already setup to encourage participants to work. Because of the program’s structure, a household with earnings will receive a larger SNAP benefit than a household of the same size and gross income in which income comes from unearned sources. In turn, more than half of SNAP households with at least one working-age, able-bodied adult work while receiving SNAP benefits.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: MELISSA VATTEROTT		PHONE NUMBER: 314-581-0561	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI COALITION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT		TITLE: FOOD AND FARM POLICY DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 3115 S. GRAND BLVD., SUITE 650			
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63139
EMAIL: mvatterott@moenviron.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 2:54 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

March 1, 2021 Representative Curtis Trent General Laws Committee Missouri House of Representatives 201 W Capitol Ave., Rm. 304-A Jefferson City, MO 65101 Dear Chairman Trent and Members of the Committee, Missouri Coalition for the Environment is a state-level nonprofit organization that works to protect Missourians by engaging in issues related to food, water, air, and the environment. Upon reviewing HB 217, we are highly concerned about the effect it will have on Missouri families and the local food system during these hard times, and we respectfully ask you to oppose it. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides low-income families with much-needed benefits for purchasing food, and it is often the only thing preventing them from going hungry. The need for SNAP benefits is greater now than ever due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused food insecurity rates in Missouri to soar above 10% in every county, with some counties experiencing rates as high as 25%. With HB 217's proposed restrictions to SNAP eligibility, we are concerned that needy Missourians will lose their benefits when they need them most. In addition to disqualifying individuals who fail to comply with federal work requirements, HB 217 proposes that entire households be deemed ineligible if the head of the household is disqualified from SNAP. This means that the punishments in this bill will extend to underprivileged children, causing them to go hungry through no fault of their own. This is especially problematic in the state of Missouri, where an estimated one in seven children struggles with hunger. Beyond the impact HB 217 will have on SNAP beneficiaries, there is also a significant economic cost to consider. Economists estimate that every dollar redeemed through SNAP generates \$1.70 in economic activity. Since SNAP dollars can only be used at grocery stores, farmers markets, and other food outlets, this bill would take money out of the pockets of Missouri farmers, food producers, and food distributors. This would be particularly devastating to the local farming community, which has already lost millions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Once again, Missouri Coalition for the Environment asks you to vote "no" on HB 217 in order to protect Missouri families, children, farmers, and food producers. Thank you for your time. Sincerely, Melissa Vatterott, JDFood & Farm Policy Director Missouri Coalition for the Environment



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: MICHELLE WITTHAUS		PHONE NUMBER: 314-537-0277	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: GENERATE HEALTH		TITLE: POLICY & ADVOCACY MANAGER	
ADDRESS: 2729 RUSSELL BLVD			
CITY: ST LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63104
EMAIL: mwitthaus@generatehealthstl.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/25/2021 5:34 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

To: Rep. Curtis Trent, and Members of the General Laws Committee
 From: Kendra Copanas, Executive Director, Generate Health
 Re: Our opposition to HB 217
 Generate Health, an organization that mobilizes and inspires the St. Louis region to improve pregnancy outcomes, family well-being, and community health, opposes House Bill 217 because it is a punitive measure that penalizes the whole family if the head of household is unable to find work and it is detrimental to the health and well-being of children. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is our nations' most important anti-hunger program and has lasting positive impacts. It helps struggling families with children, seniors, and people with disabilities put healthy food on their tables. 1 out of 6 Missourians in rural Missouri and 1 out of 8 urban Missourians presently rely on SNAP for a portion of their daily food needs. Research shows that the majority of people who are targeted by work requirements are actually eligible for exemptions. Therefore, creating and enforcing work requirements doesn't save much money, it just creates an undue burden on people living in poverty who have to go through the laborious task of gaining an exemption. If passed, this bill will prevent tens of thousands of families from accessing food. It is irresponsible to impose requirements that will cause families to lose needed supports during a pandemic when so many people are out of work and struggling to make ends meet. Since Missouri's unemployment rate has not fully rebounded to pre-pandemic levels it is unrealistic to assume that unemployed people can easily find work. We all thrive when the health and well-being of our most impacted communities come first. It is our responsibility to ensure that Missourians don't go hungry. We are asking you to please vote NO on HB 217.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: NAVA KANTOR		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: nava.kantor@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/28/2021 8:52 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

This bill would negatively impact people in the communities I live and work in. Research shows that the majority of people who are targeted by work requirements are actually eligible for exemptions. Therefore, creating and enforcing work requirements doesn't save much money, but creates an undue burden on people living in poverty who would have to go through an extra step to get approved for the exemption and creates a huge cost burden on the state. Imposing work requirements at a time when the unemployment rate is high doesn't make sense. Food is a basic need and every Missourian should have the right to access food. Taking away a family's SNAP benefit hurts kids. SNAP access is even more important right now because food pantries are running low on supplies because of the extra need the pandemic has caused. 1 out of 6 Missourians in rural Missouri and 1 out of 8 urban Missourians presently rely on SNAP. Please do NOT pass this harmful bill.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: PATRICIA A. HUBBS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: antpat2u@aol.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 1:14 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Not everyone who receives food stamps has the ability to work. So many elderly and disable Missourians cannot either physically or mentally able to hold a job. Also, too many Missourians, especially single parents, ARE working one or two minimum wage jobs just trying to keep a roof over their heads. Many must take advantage of food stamps so their families do not go hungry. If you want to stop food stamps then start paying folks a livable minimum wage. You try living on \$7.25 an hour! Thank you.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: RUTH EHRESMAN		PHONE NUMBER: 314-504-3616	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: VISION FOR CHILDREN AT RISK		TITLE: ADVOCACY COORDINATOR	
ADDRESS: 1000 NORTH VANDEVENTER			
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63118
EMAIL: rehresman@visionforchildren.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 11:33 AM	

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The Honorable Curtis Trent Chair, General Laws Committee Testimony HB 217 February 26, 2021 Dear Chairmen Trent and members of the Committee, My name is Ruth Ehresman, the Advocacy Coordinator at Vision for Children at Risk. I am testifying against HB 217. Vision for Children at Risk (VCR) is a not-for-profit organization that promotes the well-being of children and their families with a primary focus on those impacted by socio-economic risk and racial inequity. We do this by using data and research to inform the community, by promoting collaborative efforts, by engaging and supporting families, and by advocating for policy change and community investment. VCR's family engagement effort is driven by evidence-based strategies to strengthen families by promoting factors that improve family functioning and prevent child abuse and neglect. One of these factors is to connect families with concrete resources when they need them. Nothing is more critical to families than access to food. Recent surveys of families indicate that the number of children who do not have sufficient food is 10 times higher than in December 2019. Job instability is exceptionally high due to the pandemic. Many families have lost jobs or have had their hours of work reduced. Many jobs will be permanently lost as working remotely will likely continue for some workers even after the pandemic ends. Job losses have been greatest for those in low paying jobs. These are the individuals and families who are most likely to be negatively impacted by the changes proposed in HB 217. We urge close examination of the impacts of possibly disqualifying entire households from receiving SNAP benefits. When even one family member is disqualified, the result is fewer food resources for the entire family. In Missouri, 72% of SNAP participants are families with children. The possibility of disqualifying an entire household would have potential harsh impact for the more than 100,000 children who annually benefit from SNAP. SNAP's positive impacts on children can last a lifetime. Research shows that adults who received food stamps as young children are more likely to graduate from high school and less likely to suffer long-term health problems like obesity and heart disease. We also encourage the Committee to look closely at possible consequences of increased disqualification periods. Putting additional restrictions and requirements on the program threatens families' economic security and health. The federal government already has disqualification periods for SNAP participants. Increasing these disqualification periods and adding this new layer of tracking requirements would grow government involvement in the 1 in 8 Missourians who receive SNAP benefits and could create unstable homes for children. Recent experience with the Medicaid program clearly indicates that the Department of Social Services does not have sufficient staff, resources, or technology to do additional monitoring of families. There is a wealth of research that indicates that strict work requirements do not cut poverty. Instead, evidence indicates that stable employment among recipients subject to work requirements proved the exception, not the norm and that the large majority of individuals subject to work requirements remained poor, and some became poorer. Over the long term, the most successful

programs supported efforts to boost the education and skills of those subject to work requirement, rather than simply requiring them to search for work or find a job. HB 217 does not provide for these types of support for families. Children thrive when they live in safe and stable homes where their basic needs are met. VCR believes that HB 217 is a step in the wrong direction. We urge you to vote NO on it. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony. I would be happy to provide additional information from families we serve and/or research. Sincerely, Ruth Ehresman, Advocacy Coordinator
rehresman@visionforchildren.org, 314-504-3616 Vision for Children at Risk, 1000 North Vandeventer, St. Louis, MO 63113 www.visionforchildren.org.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: SCOTT BAKER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: FEEDING MISSOURI		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ADDRESS: 2306 BLUFF CREEK DR		
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65203
EMAIL: sbaker@feedingmissouri.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 11:37 AM

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Feeding Missouri represents the six food banks that serve over 1,000 agencies (pantries, shelters, kitchens) in every Missouri county. We are the largest charitable response to food insecurity in Missouri. We oppose HB 217 because we would not be able to adequately address the demand that would result with passage. While the food banks are efficient in responding to our state's persistent hunger problem, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) remains the most effective anti-hunger program. As access is restricted, those seeking food assistance look to us to help fill the gaps. We are already stretched beyond our limits. As you might imagine, the COVID pandemic, and the resulting economic impact, has put a tremendous strain on our network. Our food purchase budgets alone have increased over 300% in recent months. The economic fallout from this pandemic is expected to last for many months, if not years. The cost increases we are experiencing are not sustainable over the long-term. If the food banks and pantries are called upon to help even more people who find themselves restricted from SNAP access, we fear there won't be adequate food available for these Missourians. Encouraging employment is a worthy goal we all share. However, making it more difficult for people – including children – to access necessary nutrition is a problem we all want to avoid. To suggest the private sector can handle the increase in demand this bill would create is not accurate. Our hands are full as it is.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: TYLER MCCLAY		PHONE NUMBER: 573-635-7239
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI CATHOLIC CONFERENCE		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1022, 600 CLARK AVE.		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY	STATE: MO	ZIP: 65102
EMAIL: mcclayt@mocatholic.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 9:45 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The Missouri Catholic Conference respectfully opposes HB 217. This bill may intend the best for families participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), but it is flawed in several important respects. First, the full family sanction penalizes not just the parent, but also the children. Children are not responsible for the actions, or inactions, of their parents. In the zeal to get people to work, children would be denied basic food allowances. This is too heavy a price to pay. Other ways of encouraging work should be identified that will not harm innocent children. Second, the Division of Social Services (DSS), Family Support Division (FSD) has indicated in the fiscal note for HB 217 that it "may need to request additional federally appropriated funding from the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and additional appropriation authority to spend federal funds (in the MO Work Assistance Unit section) to serve the additional individuals that will need to comply with this work requirement in order to not be disqualified." In recent years, the FSD has moved toward contacting SNAP recipients via phone rather than face-to-face meetings, limiting their ability to assess barriers to employment. Third, while education and training programs are theoretically available in every county, transportation and lack of affordable and accessible childcare will be expensive barriers, especially as we continue to work our way out of the recession brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Work requirements should be realistic and designed to move people into employment. Without such an approach, work sanctions will not encourage work, but simply reduce the food stamp rolls, leaving families in greater poverty and their children in greater hunger. Currently, a significant percentage of Missouri households face food insecurity. The large number of Missourians that rely on SNAP benefits and food pantries need resources and support to overcome poverty, not threats of hunger. For these reasons, the Missouri Catholic Conference urges you to vote "No" on HB 217.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: VALERIE NICHOLSON-WATSON		PHONE NUMBER: 816-929-3000	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: HARVESTERS--THE COMMUNITY FOOD NETWORK		TITLE: PRESIDENT & CEO	
ADDRESS: 3801 TOPPING AVE.			
CITY: KANSAS CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 64129
EMAIL: ksiebert@harvesters.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/26/2021 1:36 PM	

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This testimony opposing HB 217 is submitted on behalf of Harvesters—The Community Food Network, the regional food bank serving northwest Missouri, including Kansas City. Our nonprofit network includes more than 350 charitable organizations providing food assistance to hungry and food insecure children, seniors and adults in 10 Missouri counties. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the nation’s most effective anti-hunger program, as has been shown again during the economic and employment crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Because it is a counter-cyclical program, SNAP expands when the economy is weak, and that expansion has been key to preventing people from falling further behind as they struggle to make it through the pandemic. The economic fallout from this pandemic is expected to last for years, especially for those low-income individuals and families who have been hardest hit. But this important lifeline for Missouri’s most vulnerable is at risk with HB 217, which imposes strict time limits on food assistance and imposes burdensome red tape on the state and the unemployed and underemployed workers receiving SNAP. The Missouri Department of Social Services does not have the infrastructure or capacity to support implementation of a statewide job tracking and training program. Chronically understaffed and underfunded, DSS does not have the capacity to provide SNAP Employment and Training spots for all eligible SNAP recipients per federal guidelines, much less the resources to create the huge job tracking bureaucracy required to monitor participation by hundreds of thousands of unemployed and underemployed workers receiving SNAP. SNAP is a nutrition program, not a jobs program. Punishing people for being unemployed by taking away their food assistance won’t help them find a better job or find work faster. It will only destabilize their families and make it harder to get their feet back on the ground. Missouri’s food banks are struggling to meet current needs and do not have the capacity to feed the tens of thousands who would likely lose their SNAP benefits under these policies. We can all agree that the best way out of poverty is a good job. But this bill is not about creating real opportunities for good-paying jobs that can support a family. It is about erecting barriers to food assistance for our most vulnerable neighbors, and that will result in more hungry Missourians. We urge you to oppose these extreme and harsh proposals that will cause tens of thousands of children and families to lose critical food assistance.



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WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: CAITLIN WHALEY		PHONE NUMBER: 573-751-4815
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES		TITLE: LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR
ADDRESS: 221 W HIGH ST		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: caitlin.n.whaley@dss.mo.gov	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/1/2021 11:50 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The Missouri Department of Social Services operates the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). As of January 2021 there were 333,904 families, or 692,593 individuals enrolled in the SNAP program. This program provides benefits to eligible households for use to purchase food items. Missouri currently has mandatory work requirements on Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD). This legislation would add all other individuals currently enrolled in SNAP who do not meet an exemption to the mandatory work requirements. Missouri has over 200 providers across the state who provide employment and training services through the SkillUP and Missouri Work Assistance programs. If any members have questions for DSS I am happy to meet with them to answer their questions.