

Lina Martinez Nocito  
Maine Youth Power  
LD 210

Lina Martinez Nocito  
Farmington, ME  
February 24, 2024

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and esteemed members of the Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Health and Human Services:

My name is Lina Martinez Nocito and I am a resident of Mount Vernon, a student at the University of Maine at Farmington, and a legislative organizer for Maine Youth Power, a rural, youth-led movement fighting for human dignity, equity, and a livable future for all. I'm writing today to strongly urge you to oppose the proposal in Language Part VV of LD 210 that would eliminate noncitizens' access to the unemployment hardship exception for public assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

Every member of the Maine community deserves access to food and other necessities, and the immigrant communities that contribute so much to our state are no exception. The idea that programs dedicated to supporting these basic human rights should be sacrificed to help balance the budget is frankly unacceptable.

The state of Maine has both the ability and the responsibility to provide basic support to all of its residents, regardless of immigration or citizenship status. In the face of tumultuous immigration policy changes on the national level, this is a key opportunity to take a stand in support of the rights of our state's immigrant communities, and I truly hope you will take it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.  
Sincerely,  
Lina Martinez Nocito