

Mayor and Council Offices

Mark Dion

Mayor

January 14, 2026



Testimony of Mark Dion, Mayor of the City of Portland,
In Support of

**LD 2051, An Act to Ensure Access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in
Maine**

Before the Committee on Health and Human Services

Honorable Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services, thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony on this important bill.

The City of Portland strongly supports LD 2051, An Act to Ensure Access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Maine which would allow for non-citizens legally admitted to the United States to access Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

SNAP is the backbone of our nation's food security safety net, providing a dignified mechanism to help low-income families temporarily access support to keep food on the table. By the State's own measure, approximately 2,000 Mainers were at risk of losing eligibility despite being lawfully present as a result of federal actions. As one of the City's most diverse communities, we have seen the impact among our own neighbors. Between July and December 2025 there was a decrease of nearly 800 individuals accessing SNAP in Portland. While this decrease could indicate wholesale transitions to self-sufficiency, such a suggestion belies reality. Our partners operating food banks are reporting higher demand than ever before, a trend growing as those affected by SNAP eligibility cuts lose access to more dignified, efficient pathways to food security.

Individuals who have lawfully applied for asylum status are work-restricted from the time of application for 150 days, processing time often brings that closer to 180 days. During this time, when they are legally unable to generate income, they are critically dependent on safety nets such as SNAP. We urge your support for this critical food security measure, which recognizes the limitations of our current system while ensuring basic food security for our community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Dion".

Mark Dion

Mayor

City of Portland, Maine