



**Testimony of Anna Korsen, Full Plates Full Potential  
Against LD 210 Part VV**

Senator Rotundo, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Gattine, Representative Meyer and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Health and Human Services, I'm Anna Korsen, Policy and Program Director with Full Plates Full Potential, a statewide non-profit working to address childhood food insecurity in Maine by maximizing access to federally funded USDA nutrition programs like SNAP and school meals.

**I am here today to voice our opposition to the proposal in Language Part VV of LD 210, which would repeal the unemployment exception for state-funded SNAP and TANF, cutting food assistance and income support for immigrant families. The program currently allows those who have work authorization but have not yet found employment or who have been working but lost their job to receive temporary benefits until they find work. This proposed change would take food benefits away from the children who experience hunger at the highest rates in Maine.<sup>1</sup>**

**Maine already has the highest rate of childhood food insecurity in New England, with at least 1 in 5 Maine kids<sup>2</sup> lacking consistent access to reliable nutrition. The food insecurity rate among immigrant households in Maine is significantly higher<sup>3</sup> as those households often face substantial barriers to meeting their basic needs. SNAP is a proven and effective solution to combat food insecurity, and strengthening SNAP is one of the identified priorities in Maine's historic Roadmap to End Hunger. Research shows that access to SNAP during childhood improves lifetime health and economic outcomes.<sup>4, 5</sup>, and tying food assistance to employment results in increased food insecurity for Maine's children and their families.**

**Maine is leading the nation in feeding kids at school due to our School Meals for all Policy and we applaud the continued investment by the legislature and administration in this budget. However, for too many kids, school breakfast and lunch are the only meals they can count on. Maine must invest in programs like SNAP to strengthen food security when kids are out of school too. Our most vulnerable children and families should not bear the burden of balancing Maine's budget at a time when costs of living are rising and federal funds for healthcare, education, and food are being cut. We can not fulfill the State of Maine's commitment to end hunger by cutting food assistance targeted at those struggling the most.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/2023-06/maines-roadmap-to-end-hunger.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics#children>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/2023-06/maines-roadmap-to-end-hunger.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cbpp.org/research/snap-is-linked-with-improved-nutritional-outcomes-and-lower-health-care-costs>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cbpp.org/research/snap-works-for-americas-children>



Please oppose the proposal in Language **Part VV** of **LD 210**, which would repeal the unemployment exception for state-funded SNAP and TANF. Please ensure all Mainers have the resources they need to meet their basic needs.

Thank you for your time and I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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