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Victoria W. Rogers, MD

Testimony in Support of LD2051 – An Act to Ensure Access to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Maine

Good afternoon, Sen. Ingwersen, Rep. Meyer and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Dr. Tory Rogers; I am a long-term resident of Saco and member of the Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

I am here today to testify in support of **LD2051 - An Act to Ensure Access to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Maine**. As you all are aware nutrition is a cornerstone for health for children and adults. When folks don't know where their next meal is coming from this adds to the stress many already have worrying about paying medical bills, heating bills, housing bills, etc. Knowing that they can access nutritious food using their SNAP benefits helps alleviates many of these worries. And helps set up children and adults for improved health. You see – to me food is about health, it really is a type of medicine.

As I think you all know, LD 2051 does NOT expand SNAP, it just puts this access back to where it was before the federal H.R. 1 was enacted which is taking away benefits from people who need them. Denying access to SNAP benefits to individuals who are here in our state legally, is callous, wrong and just short sighted.

As a pediatrician I have seen firsthand what happens to children who can't get the nutrition they need to grow, develop and thrive. Nutritious foods help keep skin, teeth, and eyes healthy, supports brain development, boosts immunity, helps with digestion, strengthens bones, supports muscles and helps achieve and maintain a healthy weight. To not provide this to children who need it the most is unacceptable.

Let's keep these benefits where they belong – in the mouths of hungry kids and their families.

Thank you for your service to our state of Maine and thank you for your time today.

Victoria W. Rogers, MD
Saco, ME