



Good afternoon Honorable members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Darcy Cooke and I am here today representing the Maine Network of Community Food Councils ([mainefoodcouncils.org](http://mainefoodcouncils.org)). We are a network of 16 locally organized and focused food councils all throughout the state and we have a mission of working to ensure that everyone in our communities has access to healthy, local foods. We have recently joined the Hunger Free Maine Coalition as a part of that mission, and we are here today to voice our strong support for LD 2122.

We support this bill because we support SNAP, and we support SNAP for two simple reasons. Number one; it works. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “SNAP is highly effective at reducing hunger and is a powerful anti-poverty tool. SNAP reduces hunger by as much as 30% and is even more effective among children.”

Number two: we believe in community responsibility. In our network of food councils we practice what we call “shared gifting,” wherein we decide together how to divvy up our money and other resources to best help each council, and in turn the entire network, succeed. It’s not about who brought in what or who’s more “deserving,” it’s about determining where our resources will be most effective. SNAP is effective, and ensuring everyone in our communities is well nourished so that they can thrive, is effective.

LD 2122 will help ensure that SNAP can continue keeping our communities nourished so that we can all thrive. We urge you to vote in favor of it today. Thank you for your time.

Darcy Cooke,  
State Coordinator, Maine Network of Community Food Councils  
Member of Hunger Free Maine