



# Dave Yost • Auditor of State

January 30, 2018

The Honorable Senator Burke  
Chair – Ohio Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee  
1 Capital Square, Room 034  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Burke,

I am writing to offer my support for Substitute House Bill 119, legislation sponsored by Representatives Henne and McColley to strengthen eligibility verification for SNAP and Medicaid program beneficiaries. These programs provide important safety nets for millions of Americans, and it is our responsibility to ensure they are administered in such a way that benefits go to those in need.

In 2016, my office released a report identifying program integrity weaknesses in the SNAP program in Ohio. The purpose of the audit was not to find fraud, but to identify structural weaknesses that heighten risk and to point out examples of potential fraud for further investigation. The report described incidents of deceased or duplicate recipients, benefits being used in far-flung states, and some accounts accumulating balances of tens of thousands of dollars. In 2015, ODJFS reported approximately \$2.5 billion in SNAP benefits issued to 824,231 primary recipients. In a program of this size, even a small amount of fraud can mean huge amounts of taxpayer money.

Substitute House Bill 119 would ensure that important factors such as state residency and enrollment in other assistance programs are verified on a quarterly basis for both SNAP and Medicaid program recipients. This bill does not seek to take benefits away from those truly in need. Rather, it protects the integrity of these vital programs and allows them to serve Ohioans who need them most. I support Substitute House Bill 119 and would like to thank Representatives Henne and McColley for their leadership on this issue. I would be happy to discuss this issue with you or any members of the committee at your pleasure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dave Yost".

**Dave Yost**  
Ohio Auditor of State