



**Representative Rob McColley
81st House District**

Chairman Ginter, Vice-Chair Conditt, Ranking Member Boyd, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide sponsor testimony for House Bill 119. As Representative Henne noted, this bill seeks to eliminate fraud in our Medicaid and SNAP benefit programs so we can make sure those limited allocated dollars go to those Ohioans who truly need them. I would like to further discuss the bill's modifications to the reporting and verification methods of the SNAP and Medicaid programs.

Self-reporting is not a full-proof method and many changes go unreported with the current system. This legislation lets us use technology to provide more thorough verifications by cross-checking databases, even across state lines, including; lottery, death records, real estate ownership, state residency, employment status changes, immigration status. House Bill 119 requires ODJFS to conduct quarterly reviews, as opposed to annually, from available sources of income, employment, residency, and other information identified above that must be reviewed at the time of an initial application. If ODJFS suspects fraud, the bill requires it to refer the case for investigation to the county prosecutor of the county in which the applicant or recipient resides.

The bill would prohibit ODJFS from denying an application or discontinuing benefits due to a discrepancy or change in circumstances until the applicant or recipient has been provided written notice. Because SNAP and Medicaid is largely governed by federal law, few program administration requirements are included in the Ohio Revised Code. This bill would establish necessary clarification on the requirements for eligibility verification of the programs.

Last summer, an audit conducted by Auditor of State Dave Yost found that systemic waste, fraud and abuse had cost Ohio taxpayers millions of dollars. The investigation revealed that 1,862 deceased individuals had been receiving benefits during the examination period. This is by no means an attack on welfare, but rather a method to reform a system that has been excessively abused. House Bill 119 will demand a more efficient and responsible use of our citizens' tax dollars.

Thank you Chair Ginter and members of the Community and Family Advancement Committee, my joint-sponsor and I are happy to answer any questions you may have.