

Ohio's 94th District

Athens County
Meigs County
Morgan County
Washington County (part)



Committees

Rules and Reference
Finance

**Jay Edwards
Ohio House Finance Chair**

HB 428 Sponsor Testimony: House Government Oversight Committee

Thank you, Representative Troy. Chair Peterson, Vice-Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Humphrey, and members of the House Government Oversight Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 428. As Representative Troy laid out in his testimony, this legislation provides a small increase in assistance to qualifying senior citizen households participating in SNAP.

By increasing the minimum monthly benefit to \$50 per month, we can better assist our senior citizens in the State of Ohio who have been impacted by the reduction in their snap benefits.

As Representative Troy mentioned in his testimony, other states are already looking at ways to supplement a fully funded federal benefit with state dollars. States like Colorado, Massachusetts, North Carolina, New Jersey, Maryland, and California have already increased their minimum benefits or plan to increase their minimum benefits.

As we have seen, the cost of living continues to increase among all demographics, and older Ohioan households have been hit the worst, especially households that are living on a fixed income. For these households, increases in their rent, healthcare, and grocery bills are something that they cannot afford.

The USDA has already reported that food prices will continue to increase another 2.5% this year with the prediction interval being 0.6-4.5 percent. If you look at inflation data year over year from 2020-2023, these numbers are much worse.

This is a legitimate opportunity to help our vulnerable senior citizens before food prices continue to increase in the coming years. The time to act is now, and I thank this committee for their attention and consideration.

Mr. Chairman and committee members, I thank you for your time, and we would be happy to answer any questions.