



Advocates for Ohio's Future
Senate Resolution 29 Proponent Testimony
Senate Workforce Development Committee
April 1, 2025

Chair Koehler, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify as a proponent on Senate Resolution 29. My name is Sarah Hudacek and I am the Coalition Manager of Advocates for Ohio's Future. Advocates for Ohio's Future (AOF) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan coalition of state and local health and human services policy, advocacy and provider organizations that strive to strengthen families and communities through health and human services.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides monthly allotments to low-income households that include children, older adults, working Ohioans, Ohioans with disabilities, and more, to purchase the food they need at retailers. In recent years, organized crime rings have targeted the SNAP program and placed point of sale skimming devices that steal SNAP EBT card data, which is then used to steal benefits from victims' accounts.

Victims of SNAP EBT theft are Ohioans who are doing everything right, who have been proven eligible for the program, and who are visiting a SNAP authorized retailer to purchase food to feed their family.

Currently, SNAP EBT cards use only magstripes, without more secure chip-enabled or tap-to-pay technology, which makes the cards vulnerable to skimming attacks. Recognizing the broad impact of skimming across the nation, in 2022, Congress authorized the federal government to reimburse SNAP recipients who, through no fault of their own, were victims of criminal theft of benefits. After two years, federal support for replacing skimmed SNAP benefits ended in December. Victims of SNAP skimming now have no recourse when their benefits are stolen, other than to turn to local direct service providers.

Theft of SNAP benefits has put further pressure on Ohio's foodbank system to fill the gaps, at a time when foodbanks are already facing record levels of demand for help. This theft has also placed continuous and undue burden on innocent SNAP recipients, who have faced hunger and financial hardship with these losses.

Advocates for Ohio's Future would like to thank Senator Schaffer for his leadership on this challenge and asks this committee to join the Senator in urging Congress to resume replacement of stolen SNAP benefits and to implement a new and more secure EBT card technology to prevent skimming.

Some states have already begun the process of upgrading their EBT card technology to be better protected by investing the state portion of the shared SNAP operational costs to draw down an additional federal match. Ohio House Bill 163, which is also drafted as budget amendment HC0404-1, would begin this process in Ohio.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support and for your consideration. I am happy to answer questions you may have.

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