

Senators Roegner and Craig, and members of the Government Oversight and Accountability Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Lis Regula. I am a college professor, father, and advocate, as well as a member of the LGBTQ community. I have given support to LGBTQ young adults who were rejected by their family of origin off and on for many years. These folks, like many individuals from under represented communities, face discrimination and that discrimination often leads to lessened access to economic resources. I am strongly opposed to SB 17, Regards eligibility for SNAP, Medicaid, and unemployment.

SB 17 blocks households with assets worth more than \$2,250 from SNAP (food assistance- meaning that homeowners would be barred from these benefits, effectively punishing those who have made fiscally responsible choices and bought instead of rented their home.

SB17 imposes a work or education requirement to receive Medicaid benefits. This makes it more difficult for those with disabilities to access Medicaid, and blocks individuals from gaining necessary healthcare until they meet those requirements. Delays in health care not only lead to poorer outcomes, but cost more in the long run. At the same time, SB 17 limits exemptions to the Medicaid work requirement. For example, Ohioans couldn't get an age exemption until age 65.

SB 17 also reverts to a "change reporting" system instead of the current "simplified reporting." This means SNAP recipients would need to report ANY change of weekly income, like an extra shift at work. Under the simplified system, they must only report changes that take them above the eligibility threshold. This will cost more in administrative work and time for an already stressed system. These changes will lead to *higher* costs, not lower.

Beyond that, SB 17 is another burden to overcome before receiving food assistance, and put forward at a time when we are in the midst of a global pandemic, where Ohio is one of the worst states in getting individuals vaccinated, thus prolonging the time until we can move forward as a state and safely re-open and find a new normal.

<https://www.wkyc.com/article/news/health/coronavirus/ohio-lagging-other-states-covid-19-vaccination-race/512-c6806ccd-3c65-4708-822b-02cd5ae27ff7>

I urge you to consider what I have said, and find compassion in your heart for struggling Ohioans, and not make their already challenging lives more so. God commanded us to be kind, help the poor, and love one another. This bill does the exact opposite of those three things.

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