



## **Testimony regarding SB17**

Introduced 1/26/21 by Sen Shaffer, District 20

*To amend sections 4501.27, 5101.33, 5101.54, 5101.542, 5163.01, 5163.07, 5166.01, and 5166.37 and to enact sections 4141.286, 4141.287, 4141.351, 4141.60, 5101.331, 5101.545, 5101.546, 5101.547, 5101.548, 5120.212, 5163.50, 5163.51, 5163.52, and 5166.45 of the Revised Code regarding eligibility for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Medicaid, work and education requirements for certain Medicaid recipients, requirements for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program electronic benefit transfer cards, and eligibility for and overpayments of unemployment compensation.*

## **Chairwoman Roegner, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Craig and Members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee,**

On behalf of the approximately 248,000 people living in poverty in the 30 counties of Appalachian Ohio, I am writing to express my opposition to SB 17 with the following concerns:

- 1. Undue administrative burden for processing benefit applications.** As passed by the 132nd General Assembly, SB 293 requires agencies to achieve certain percent reductions in regulations. **It is expected that government agencies take appropriate action to limit redundancy and streamline processes.** SB 17 would have the DJFS impose additional checks under section 3121.894; the Social Security Act; an unspecified number of workforce agency databases; *and* match data with the Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections.
- 2. Undue administrative burden for benefit recovery.** Substantial protections are already in place to mitigate fraud and recover overpayment. The cost to JFS to administer the additional actions detailed in Sec. 4141.351 outweigh the potential benefits of recovering an already limited number of overpayments.
- 3. Undue administrative burden for reporting compliance with provisions of this legislation.** As exemplified on 2/10/21 by Director Henderson's testimony to the Ohio House of Representatives Finance Committee, systems are already in place to monitor

and report the activities of the Department. Imposing additional reporting with no specificity of intent is an undue burden upon the time of the Department and that of the speaker of the house of representatives, senate president, and the members of the standing committees of the senate and the house of representatives.

- 4. Redundancy of identification verification.** The requirement to include a color photograph on the front of the benefits debit card as described in Sec. 5101.331 would impose undue burden upon benefit recipients. The established application system is already onerous to people with limited access to technology, internet, transportation, and - perhaps most importantly - time to comply with the requirements to prove their identity and eligibility.

In conclusion, it is our strong recommendation that SB17 not move forward in the legislative process. People in poverty in Appalachian Ohio were struggling enough to survive even before the COVID crisis, and the DJFS has struggled enough to assist them. **Let's let the systems we already have do their work to mitigate fraud and ensure eligibility.**

Thank you for your attention and leadership in these trying times,



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