

May 6, 2021

Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee

SB 17

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Craig and members of the Committee,

My name is Loh, I am from Cleveland, which is a diverse metropolitan area with rich people, but also lots of poor people. I am one of the poor people, which makes me not a minority, but a majority. Lots of poor people are struggling and want to do better, but don't have means to do so. That's why I joined NOBLE, so I can help more of us.

I object to Senate Bill 17 and ask the committee to vote NO. One particular problem with the changes the bill would make to SNAP, Medicaid, and unemployment is the eligibility requirements. They are cumbersome. It's impossible for poor people who already lost means to have a decent life while also spending the time to comply in a timely manner. They already ask you to submit lots of documents, and if you miss anything they only give you ten days to submit it. Some of these documents you need to get from a doctor, and getting an appointment is not easy. People of low means without insurance or on Medicaid have a very difficult time to schedule with a doctor, who have heavy workloads as is. With COVID-19 many things have to be sent by mail, which makes all the paperwork even harder. By the time you get the mail, you have to be immediately submitting new forms, and it all takes time. Plus, transportation to pick up or deliver forms in person is even harder than usual. Lots of people have no way to fill these troublesome requirements.

It's hard already, and now you want to put even more requirements and restrictions in? If you have been homeless from the pandemic, how would you find a job right away to fulfill these work requirements? This also affects housing, people who have been trying to find a job for the past three years but haven't found one cannot be expected to find one in three months.

This committee's time would be better spent finding ways to make it easier to apply for Medicaid, SNAP, and unemployment, so people can focus their efforts on improving their situation, rather than making things harder.

Adding a photo ID to SNAP cards is a waste of precious taxpayer dollars. It would be adding administrative costs, while just making it harder for people on SNAP to get food when they need to send someone else grocery shopping for them.

I heard a very important issue addressed at the February 24th hearing – fraud. However, the content of this bill will only hurt people through eligibility, but will not do anything to stop or prevent fraud. If we want to tackle fraud, we should spend taxpayer money wisely. I.e., establish another anti-fraud bill, rather than cutting poor people's lifelines, such as SNAP, Medicaid, and unemployment insurance.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Loh