



**Senator Matt Huffman  
12<sup>th</sup> District  
S.B. 80 – Sponsor Testimony  
Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid  
March 21, 2017**

Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Beagle, Ranking Member Tavares, and members of the Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee, thank you for offering me the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 80, which would establish requirements for color photographs on Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards issued under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

As you may know, benefits from the SNAP are distributed and utilized via EBT cards held by individuals and families participating in the program. Under current law, EBT cards do not contain any form of photographic identification. This leaves beneficiaries vulnerable to theft of their SNAP benefits and also allows individuals to trade benefits for other goods and services. Every dollar fraudulently wasted is a dollar that should and could go to someone in need. The combined error rate (over and under payments) in Ohio is 4.67% as of FY 2014, according to the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) division of USDA, which amounts to millions of dollars of errors.

This legislation would require the addition of a color photograph of the person or persons for whom that EBT card is issued, as well as a telephone number and web address for reporting fraudulent use of SNAP funds on the back of the card. Multiple users can access the benefit assigned to a single account. Either multiple cards will be issued (each with a photo ID), tied to a single account, or multiple pictures could be placed on a single card to ensure access to the benefit. The beneficiary will need to authorize other users to access his or her benefit. It is also possible for the primary beneficiary to designate two or three other individuals who can access the benefit – either by picture or by name. These designees may include beneficiaries' children or caregivers, as examples.

Also, the language as drafted provides exemptions for individuals sixty years and older, the disabled, victims of domestic violence, and those with religious objections to being photographed. Although not contained in the current draft legislation, a provision could be added allowing seniors and others to "opt-in" to the photo requirement as an added level of protection to their benefit.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this legislation. If you have any questions regarding my testimony of legislation, I would be happy to answer them now.