

ICADV – oppose SSB 1105/HF 3

The Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV) urges legislators to reject this bill (SSB 1105). ICADV supports 22 local agencies providing direct support services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, human trafficking, and homicide.

People do well when their needs are met, and food is the most basic need. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps feed children and adults and remains the nation's most effective and immediately responsive tool in fighting hunger and reducing poverty.

Making it harder to access SNAP is bad for everyone. Among all public support programs- SNAP eligibility requirements should be the least burdensome for *all* lowans who rely on this very basic support to make ends meet and to feed their families.

The proposed changes in SSB 1105 contradict the policy goals of SNAP in fighting hunger but also fail to meet the stated program efficiency purposes of this bill. SNAP benefits are fully funded by the federal government with states splitting the administrative costs with the federal government. The proposed changes dramatically increase administrative costs without saving any money based on the experience of states who have made similar changes.

SSB 1105 would cost more money and leave people worse off, i.e., it would kick thousands off SNAP, increase food insecurity and economic hardship *and* decrease economic stimulus in local communities. According to the [USDA](#) Economic Research Service, every \$1 in SNAP benefits generates \$1,54 in economic activity.

This bill is bad for everyone, including domestic violence victims who struggle to meet basic needs while seeking safety and rely on SNAP to feed their families. We are concerned by the computerized identity authentication requirement, the requirement for custodial parents to cooperate with child support recovery, and the proposed asset test for SNAP eligibility.

Please make the **computerized identity authentication requirement** optional. We support the potential for this provision to increase access to SNAP for some applicants (those with transportation or medical barriers, or without access to required forms of ID), but it also presents a significant access barrier for many domestic violence victims without internet access, limited credit history, or limited English proficiency. Making this optional would increase access for all and would align with USDA SNAP regulations.

Requiring custodial parents to cooperate with child support recovery to be eligible for SNAP would immediately make many domestic violence victims ineligible. Leaving a violent partner is the most dangerous time for victims and children. Anecdotally, almost all survivors served by local agencies we represent providing emergency shelter services, rely on SNAP to get back on their feet.

Many victims do not engage with child support recovery for good reasons and initially it is mostly about safety. This provision is unnecessary and adding a family violence exemption would not make it better– adding this step delays access to food and would not help anyway because most could not obtain the added documentation needed for an exemption or want to risk alerting a partner of their location. There is no way to implement this provision without leaving women and children without access to food.

Making SNAP eligibility requirements consistent with other public benefit programs is uniquely unnecessary here. Medicaid and TANF already require child support cooperation and administering that requirement is costly. There is no need to duplicate this requirement in SNAP where the very purpose of the program is to meet an urgent need for food. The fiscal note for this provision in previous bills estimated an enormous administrative cost and the experience in other states showed it was not close to being cost-effective or even generating significant child support recovery for families.

[North Carolina](#) implemented a similar pilot project (for child care subsidies) and found it to be highly inefficient. It cost \$2 million to implement, but only led to a total of about \$7,000 in child support payments to 12 families over a year, or about \$50 per month.

A new asset test would also make many domestic violence victims ineligible for SNAP. Many survivors flee homes with children and the clothes they are wearing but even for those able to leave with more, most have little access to cash, bank accounts, and key identification documents because a partner destroyed documents and prevented access to money.

Service providers routinely help survivors replace documents needed to enroll in SNAP- which is no small task. Adding an asset test for eligibility creates an insurmountable barrier for survivors who either cannot access the additional documentation or would stop trying due to safety concerns.

SNAP enables many lowans to eat and eligibility requirements for this program should be the least burdensome. Being able to access support programs like SNAP influences a victim's ability to keep their family safe and meet basic needs. Enabling survivors to get back on their feet at this critical time can mean the difference between a lifetime of economic hardship and a future free from violence. Please oppose this bill that makes it harder for lowans struggling to make ends meet, to access food.

Prepared remarks Senate subcommittee SSB 1105, Feb 15, 2023
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