

Comment Report

HF 3

A bill for an act relating to public assistance program integrity, making appropriations, and including effective date provisions.(See HF 613.)

Subcommittee Members: Jeneary-CH, Meyer, A., Wessel-Kroeschell

Date: 01/26/2023

Time: 11:30 AM

Location: RM 103, Sup. Ct. Chamber

Name: Jacob Wanderscheid

Comment: Specifically on behalf of the Food Bank of Siouxland, which serves eight northwest Iowa counties (including Woodbury, Monona, Crawford, Ida, Cherokee, Plymouth, Sioux, and Lyon), I am glad to read the WIC requirements are being removed for House File 3. As a state proud of pork producers, eliminating the ability for SNAP recipients to purchase fresh meat is harmful for many reasons; thank you. I support the decision for contribute an additional \$1,000,000 to support purchasing fruits and vegetables. Fresh products are important to health of all users, especially children and elders.

Name: Linda Schreiber

Comment: What is the purpose of this bill? Is it to provide nutrition to lowincome, foodinsecure individuals or is it intended to limit options? During the pandemic, more people became food insecure. This is not speculation, it is a fact. As a Master Gardener, we practice Plant A Row to grow and give excess produce to area food pantries to help people and families who do not have enough fresh food to eat. Food insecurity is growing even in Iowa, one of the richest agricultural states in the nation. The SNAP program is tied to the Farm Bill, federal legislation. SNAP recipients can use the program to buy fresh food at farmers markets. Do legislators feel SNAP recipients are using this benefit carelessly by buying items at the store that are considered "luxury" items like soda and chips? But what you may not know is that while these are not a daily necessity, those items are a part of our culture and especially tied to our sporting culture. Investing everyone in Iowa and America in our culture helps create a stronger state and nation.

Name: Teresa Mathews

Comment: This is NOT appropriate to limit meat/protein sources for families receiving essential SNAP Benefits. This impacts the growing brains of growing children! If you intend to be "ProLife" then let's be sure that children and families have ongoing access to SNAP foods to feed their families. Increase education and guidelines for good choices but do NOT remove fresh meat and other foods! I see no purpose for these changes, it feels meanspirited and unhealthy. The statistics are clear: MORE people are now foodinsecure. More people are living in "food deserts" without transportation or access to real grocery stores, yes Here, in Iowa where much of the nation's food is grown. Focus on supporting SNAP to support growing families.

Name: Susan Wilbois

Comment: OK Republicans. Prove you're more than probirth advocates. You evidently don't care about what happens to people after they are born. YOU ARE NOT PROLIFE IF YOU RESTRICT INDIVIDUALS FROM GETTING HEALTHY FOODS.

Name: Bonnie Pitz

Comment: I just returned from my local grocery store. As I looked at the products that will help young people grow healthy and strong and develop their brain power, I was saddened to think that in Iowa there is an effort to limit common items such as fresh meat and white bread. What can the committee be thinking? As a retired teacher with lots of experience with children and my own family, Iowa needs to do everything it can to help young families be successful, not limit foods for children. The job of legislators needs to be working to make Iowa the best place to raise children not throw up needless barriers to family lives.

Name: Pamela Wilson

Comment: I beseech you to not starve Iowans with your restrictions to Snap. I am a retired RN. I am sure there are those who play the system and cheat, but the majority do not. I had a client several years ago who had a family of 4. Father was nonexistent. She fixed Hamburger Helper made with 1/2 pound of hamburger and a canned vegetable 5 nights a week. Food stamp users cannot afford fresh vegetables and fruit. Please don't restrict food for those who have so little.

Name: Heather Sheets

Comment: This bill punishes people for being poor, many of whom are among the working poor, who may hold more than one minimum wage job. Legislators should, instead of visiting constituents who donate to their campaigns, visit food banks in their districts to learn about the real needs of people in their district. SNAP programs are largely funded by the federal government, and a state with a \$1.8 BILLION surplus should not be making cuts to the budget on the backs of people who may work in meat processing plants, grocery stores, or what are considered vital jobs. The legislators support the "right to life" until those children are born into poor families that live below what is considered the poverty line. One of the restrictions on the assets these families can have to qualify is far less than what experts say one should have in savings in case of an emergency, such as a sudden death, illness, loss of job, or need to care for a family member. The salt and sugar levels in canned goods, such as fruits, vegetables, and meat are not healthy for someone who may have high blood pressure, heart issues, or diabetes. Fresh meat, vegetables, and fruit can be far less expensive than canned goods, unless the canned goods are on sale. I think it is ridiculous to exclude white rice from the food people can buy, because that is something that can be used to stretch whatever food items a family may have. There are many people availing themselves of food banks for items, such as toilet paper, paper towels, dish, bath, and laundry soap, toothpaste, shampoo, diapers, feminine hygiene products, because SNAP doesn't allow the monies to be used for basic human hygiene products. Now, people who used to donate to food banks, are finding themselves getting donations from a food bank to make it through the month. This is a punitive and draconian bill to punish the working poor, elderly people on limited incomes, and children who are less fortunate in this state. This is shameful!

Name: Rachel Henning

Comment: I oppose HF3. The fact that the food restrictions are being removed is good, but it is not enough. This bill will not add anything to our economy Iowa only pays for half of the administrative cost, the rest comes from the federal government. In fact I have read that the proposed changes will actually increase the amount spent by the state. This bill does not take into account the reality of many Iowan lives, especially those living in rural communities. It will harm Iowans and lead to increased food insecurity something that should be a source of intense embarrassment in a state that prides itself on its agriculture. It is bad enough that there are Iowans going hungry now. Any bills that restrict and prevent helping people meet their basic needs including HF3 must be opposed and voted down.

Name: Barb Nelson

Comment: I am invested in helping the food insecure in Villisca. I assist with the Villisca Interchurch Council Food Pantry. I serve on the board of Feed the Pack, a 501c3

whose mission is to feed the hungry youth and elderly in our community. We do this by providing weekend and school break meals to eligible students. Those on free and reduced lunch may sign up for the weekend meals. We provide a community table twice a month for the older adults living in our rent assisted apartments. Villisca is not unique. Hunger and poverty are real in our farming communities of Southwest Iowa. Every other month we deliver 85 food boxes from the Food Bank of the Heartlands Mobile Food Pantry. Based on census data this s 17% of Viliscas 504 households. Those households are referred to us by the physician office and community members. Today at the food pantry I helped a retired man shop. He was shopping for his household of three adults and three children. One of the adults is his wife. He and his wife live on \$1500 a month and \$51 a month in SNAP support. With rising utility costs and living expenses, he says they run out of money at the middle of the monthand now his car wont work. SNAP is a federal program for which Iowa pays a portion of the administrative costs. What is the reason for cutting food resources that come from the federal government? Could you and one other live on a food budget of \$51 a month? Now you want to make it harder to qualify for SNAP benefits and limit what can be purchased to a diet designed to supplement the nutrition of pregnant women, nursing mothers, and children ages onefive. This diet wasnt intended to be the only food for this population. If your goal is to make it harder for our elderly, disabled, and working poor families to thrive, you will meet that goal with this bill. If this bill passes with restricted food choices (along with allowing only one vehicle/family in rural Iowa where most have to drive to get to work or school), Iowa WILL see an increase in hunger. I challenge any legislator to eat only what is on the WIC list for a month. If you try to do that and it doesnt work, just know that you are welcome to stop in at Villiscas Food Pantry on Wednesday where you will be offered meat, baked beans, soup, salad dressing, mayonnaise (to mix with your WIC tuna and salmon) and a lot of other food not available to you on a WIC food list.

Name: Patricia Sheller

Comment: What is the sense of these restrictions on the food people can buy? There are many ways to eat sensible, healthy, and inexpensive meals that include these foods. Why take choices away like this? Fresh meat, shredded cheese, different kinds of beans, why are you trying to forbid these? You aren't dieticians, and you don't know what particular nutritional needs different families have.

Name: Sandy Wilson

Comment: Citizen Engagement declares IN FAVOR of HF 3.

Name: John Tovar

Comment: Iowa's Governor and republican lawmakers should disregard their bizarre intentions of delivering a law that would be very cruel, unusual, unhealthy, and devastating to a segment of Iowans that are poor. Who are these people amongst the Iowa legislators that could be so cruel minded?

Name: Tabitha Simms-Quigley

Comment: I oppose HF 3. By restricting food options for parents using SNAP, its restricting the freedom of the parents to make a decision on for whats best for the family. I do support the funding of double up food bucks. That helps farmers and families, but please dont have that money tied to federal approvals. Iowa families and farmers dont have the time to wait for federal approvals. The household asset limits are also needlessly harsh. They discourage saving, and especially if a second car is included in the calculation, makes it harder to access employment for two parents if youve sold a car to qualify for SNAP.

Name: Jennifer Cooke

Comment: A BIG NO FOR HF3Wow! A 1.8 billion dollar surplus in Iowa and lawmakers want

to limit and restrict low income families SNAP benefits?! This is just proof that our legislators are so far removed from serving their constituents needs. Removing resources to obtain fresh meats, fruits, and vegetables from the people in our community that need them the most is an insult to our pride in our Iowa agriculture as well as a slap in the face to those who are struggling to survive. For the love of compassion Do better for those you serve Iowa lawmakers! Do you continue to forget that you are elected officials whom we pay to be our voice? I am so sick and tired of seeing the children and families I serve being bullied by lawmakers that want to micromanage and minimize programs low income families utilize. The same legislators that dont believe in big government. Whose purpose does this bill honestly serve?

Name: Julia Williams

Comment: Unbelievable, that in the world's breadbasket, our legislators would forbid struggling families the basic blocks of nutrition. Where is their humanity? First, taking away our hope for college loan forgiveness, our constitutional right to healthcare, our promise of Public Schools fully funded & committed to truth in history & science. Seems like every move this session has been against everything Iowans count on, including "Iowa Nice".

Name: Theresa Johnson

Comment: I strongly oppose HF3. Food insecurity is increasing in Iowa because of the pandemic, crazy rent prices, and the extremely low minimum wage. Children need access to protein for their developing brains. Children deserve adequate nutrition; they are innocent pawns in these meanspirited political machinations. If Iowa politicians are truly prolife, they won't deprive low income people of food.

Name: Kayla Perkins

Comment: I absolutely oppose HF3! In what way would restricting access to resources benefit or help low income families? Children need access to healthy, fresh foods to grow and thrive. By cutting access to them, you are directly harming these children and their families. Iowas government needs to stop thinking about money for once and think about what Iowas people need! That is what Iowans pay you to do. Children are our future, they need to come first always!

Name: Christy Shackelford

Comment: I do not agree with this. Our Iowa youth needs to be able to have access to healthy foods. How can you think it's ok to tell a parent what is good enough or to good to feed their kids. This is not the right way to go and I hope you realize this is only going to hurt our already struggling Iowa families.

Name: Kashana Gohl

Comment: I am registering in strong opposition to asset limits, increased recertification checks and mandatory trainings proposed as part of HF3. I am a fulltime working mom with two children with dietary allergies, learning disabilities and sensory issues. My fulltime gross monthly income averages out to about \$2000, so we struggle to fill nutrition gaps after we run out of SNAP before the end of each month. With rising costs of everything from food to gas, there is no room to save, and I feel like each year brings a new crisis that causes us to count on tax refunds to pay for things like vehicle repairs. Ive had to skip paying the power bill at times to ensure we have enough food, or I have to choose to be late on rent. Even though we struggle, the public conversation around people who receive assistance makes me ashamed to go to food pantries or even the gospel mission to eat because I know there are others that struggle, probably more than we do. As far as mandating participating in trainings, increasing the number of recertification checks, I work fulltime, my children go to school, we have mental health appointments to support their learning and behavioral challenges. There are no more hours in the day to devote to additional hurdles. Lawmakers need to stop assuming that families like mine who benefit from

SNAP are in need of additional checkups, asset limits and restrictions. Instead, invest more in programs like Double Up Food Bucks. A part of HF 3 commits \$1 million to this program so families like mine can access more fresh fruits and vegetables. If elected leaders could pass this without limitations, it would be a step in the right direction. Now is not the time to make it harder to access benefits. Focus on solutions that help, not find ways to make it harder on children and families.

Name: Brandy Sickels

Comment: I want to start by saying I support the 1 million dollars towards double up food bucks. The program is beneficial for so many. As far as the rest of the bill, I am incredibly disappointed. In this time of inflation this bill seems to be taking away from those who need it more now. I have friends who struggle with medical issues. Under 40. Cannot work, struggling to find ways to just not feel like dying and on top of that they get denied essential help? Or have to jump through so many hoops its almost impossible because of their limited energy due to illness. Then talk about families who NEED two cars to just make it to the jobs and school and still barely make it paycheck to paycheck currently. If you want to help Iowans, do not pass this. Pause and continue to look for better ways. I won't claim to have the answers. We all need to work together to find what will work. This isn't it. We need more investments in food security, not less. I am fortunate. I work full time with a well paying job. So does my spouse. However with the increasing costs of living I have anxiety over providing. My heart breaks for those whom already run out of money before the month is over and are now facing the possibility of making less last longer. As a mother of two littles, I imagine my children being in need and what I'd hope would be there for them if I couldn't. Please think of your loved ones when making these decisions.

Name: Vicki Aden

Comment: I strongly oppose this bill. What is the purpose? It appears to just make it harder for people in need to access these benefits. And really, you want to restrict people from buying fresh meat with their benefits in Iowa? You should be working to increase food security in this state, not increase hunger. This bill will only increase hunger.

Name: Jackie Cordon

Comment: Limiting SNAP benefits to the WIC list would defeat the whole purpose of SNAP benefits. Limiting growing children and teens to just canned tuna and salmon? Families would be forced into feeding their kids a lot of cereal and bread. And take a town like Villisca. You need food for supper and maybe your car isnt that trustworthy to go all the way to a HyVee or Fareway or youre working two parttime jobs and dont have the time. So youre stuck with Dollar General. But you cant buy the hamburger and feed them sloppy joes or a bowl of chili. Instead its going to be tuna and cereal for supper. A real winner for growing bodies. This bill shows just how out of touch and unrealistic these legislators are. It also shows pure laziness. Lets take a list designed to be supplemental for pregnant women and young children and substitute it for one designed for growing kids and teens (most single adults, even those on SSI dont qualify). Instead of saying okay, lets take off pop and maybe a few other things, they say this will do. All Iowans should be horrified by this.

Name: Mary Ellen Devereux Taylor

Comment: Your exclusion of meat, flour, fresh vegetables, fresh fruit, rice, and other food items is difficult to understand. This is Iowa! We promote healthy food, locally grown meat, vegetables and fruit. In addition, many cultures within our borders rely on rice as a daily food. And, flour! How is a family to make their own bread without flour? No salads. No fruit. Legislators need to spend some time eating only the foods on their approved list! This is a disgusting bill! Even discriminatory when the main daily food for many rice is not allowed! I urge you to reconsider your intended actions. Theyre mean. Just plain mean!

Name: Mary Anne Gibson

Comment: The cruelty expressed by this bill, HF3, is shocking, even in the current environment where making life more controlled and difficult for Iowans appears to be the order of the day. I feel that I hardly recognize what is happening in our state and it leads to a deep feeling of sadness. Shame on this attack on lowincome Iowans who live with food insecurity every day. Having worked for many years in a mental health center, I saw daily the serious need of many of our citizens. When people are struggling to deal with basic needs, the emotional stress and strain takes its toll on all members of the household, adults and children alike. One becomes suspicious when one of the reasons put forth for this proposed legislation is that the dollars saved are needed in other areas of the budget. With the fast track of the school voucher bill, which skirted review by the appropriations committee, we might wonder if the projected savings of HF3 will be directed to the costly school voucher program. Some of you may profess to be led by the Gospel. May you be reminded of the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 25:40:"...whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Name: Jackie Cordon

Comment: One vehicle this bill would consider anything over one vehicle as an asset. Forget whether you have two working adults who both need a car and they drive old cars not worth much. \$2000 in assets adds up pretty quick for anyone. 2/3 of our counties have under 20,000 people. That means theyre rural and you have to drive to be able to work. Are we forcing people to give up a car and a job then so only one person works? Forget if a kid has to get to the doctor or home sick from school?

Name: Pat Shipley

Comment: Please oppose HF 3. The proposed food restrictions are nutritionally limited to provide food for families and the elderly. The restriction on cars makes no sense if a family is working multiple jobs. Asset restrictions don't allow for families to have any emergency funds available for unplanned expenses. This bill is punitive to those who struggle with food insecurities and may already live in a rural high poverty area that is also a food desert. There has been no data presented to support the proposed restrictions. The bill is unnecessary and simply places further burden on families or the elderly trying to have enough to eat.I oppose this legislation.

Name: Pat Shipley

Comment: Please oppose HF 3. The proposed food restrictions are nutritionally limited to provide food for families and the elderly. The restriction on cars makes no sense if a family is working multiple jobs. Asset restrictions don't allow for families to have any emergency funds available for unplanned expenses. This bill is punitive to those who struggle with food insecurities and may already live in a rural high poverty area that is also a food desert. There has been no data presented to support the proposed restrictions. The bill is unnecessary and simply places further burden on families or the elderly trying to have enough to eat.I oppose this legislation.

Name: Susie Olesen

Comment: My friends 83 year old sister worked at a low wage job her entire life, owns an old car that her brothers and sisters keep going, is active in her church, and is a fine human being. She depends on SNAP for groceries. Not sure who you all think depends on SNAP, but Iowa has disabled veterans, people who have been laid off, elderly who live in poverty, young families with hungry children not many looking for a handout. Also, there is very little fraud. It appears you want to humiliate those in need. If you have \$1 billion to provide tuition to people with high incomes, surely you can feed the poor. Proverbs 14:31 (NIV)He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.

Name: Denise O'Brien

Comment: I oppose HF3. It is punitive, restrictive and biased against low income families. If Iowa had a higher minimum wage, some of these families would not require the assistance. This bill is especially hard on rural people who have to spend gas money to even get to a grocery store. Many rural folks have to rely on Dollar General to get essentials. Right out of the gate this legislature has introduced mean spirited attacks on the poor and people who don't fit a white middle class description. Thankfully you are increasing The Double Up Food Bucks. So much of the language this legislature uses is about freedom and choice. Those two words, in this context, don't apply to those in need.

Name: Cindy O'Connell

Comment: This is one more disgraceful proposal by Republicans to punish people for being in a low income bracket. Meat and all healthy diet choices must be left available in this public assistance program.

Name: Sarah Smith

Comment: Please do not advance the bill to increase restrictions on eligibility for SNAP. I am so discouraged that some Iowa legislators believe it is important to restrict the foods SNAP users may purchase. When I read the list of noneligible foods, it seems like poor Iowans will be punished for their lack of income, so they don't deserve to have the foods they choose. Those who live in communities with no grocery store would have no access to fresh fruits and vegetables, yet forbidden to buy canned fruits and vegetables at Dollar General. Please reconsider the reasoning behind treating Iowans this way. In early, Sarah Smith

Name: Tiffany Welch

Comment: I oppose HF 3. The only good thing is the funding of Double Up Food Bucks, a program that helps SNAP recipients as well as Iowa farmers and grocery stores by giving incentives to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. The rest of the bill is completely absurd if we truly want to value parent choice (restricting food options strips this choice away). The asset limits discourages saving for an emergency. Only having 1 car per household makes it nearly impossible to get two parents to employment to get back to being self sufficient, especially given the profound lack of public transportation in most of the state. Please fund double up food bucks, but forget the rest that makes it harder for families to access food.

Name: Carlyn Crowe

Comment: On behalf of the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council we submit these comments and suggestions. Overall, we are concerned with the unintended consequences this bill may have for people with disabilities and family members who may be providing care for adults and children with disabilities. Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. 239.2 Identity authentication. Requiring all public assistance program applicants to complete a computerized questionnaire to confirm their identity may create undue burden on those with disabilities and their family members. The additional reporting requirements seem duplicative. Much of this information is regularly provided to DHHS, particularly for those on Medicaid. Since reporting and asset requirements seem duplicative for both Medicaid and SNAP eligibility, could Medicaid members be exempted from the suggested requirements? Sec.11. NEW SECTION. 249A.58 Ensuring integrity in the medical assistance program and real time records review and determining eligibility for Medicaid based on an asset review of every member of the household. There is no definition of limitations on the assets of a household or penalties. Is it the intention to deny Medicaid to a child or adult with a disability because they live in a household with working parents, who may own their home, farm, cars, phones and all of the necessities of everyday life, except that they don't have the ability to provide care for their loved one with a disability can not otherwise get health care unless they are on Medicaid. Unfit for Work Terminology Sec. 14: The use of the term physically or mentally unfit for

employment is derogatory; if this is not a term used federally in the program, it should be changed. Physically or mentally unable to work or unable to find work due to their disability. As many unemployed people with disabilities want to work. We appreciate that an amendment is being considered on the limitations of food purchases available to be purchased with SNAP. We want Iowans with disabilities to have access to the foods that promote good health, but other barriers exist that need to be addressed first, such as education on healthy eating and food preparation. These considerations are best reserved for program implementation, not by limiting food choices.

Name: Jacob Wanderscheid

Comment: On behalf of the Food Bank of Siouxland, I am against House File 3 for several reasons. First, asset limits for SNAP will force people off the program. Most households in the SNAP program have assets and at the same time have low income. Vehicles used for commuting purposes and children savings accounts would not be excluded from asset limits. These items discourage saving and working (either by discouraging working at all or by limiting how far a person will go to get a job which is right for them). Establishing an asset limit will require more administrative dollars and retroactively cost the state of Iowa more money than it hopes to save. Asset Limits require more documentation and review. Further, increasing monthly and/or quarterly eligibility checks will further increase administrative work, increasing the cost of the program again. These checks could remove people from the program, and any money saved will be a direct loss to local retail outlets. Lastly, real-time verification checks will increase work load, increasing the number of staff DHHS needs to run the program. As of FY21, Iowa's error rate is nearly at national rates. As such, there is no real urgency to change. Thank you for your time!

Name: Kathy Graeve

Comment: Vote No on HF3. Leave eligibility requirements alone and do not restrict food requirements. More Iowans than ever rely on food assistance. Many are the working poor who need assistance not punishment. Stop this cruel and unnecessary bill now.

Name: Barbara Prather

Comment: The Northeast Iowa Food Bank is opposed to HF 3. For someone who is retired and living on a small pension and social security, they would have absolutely nothing left for them to seek SNAP, if the Asset limits are put into place. For a person who needs their car to get to work, they wouldn't be able to access benefits. When the pandemic disaster proclamation ended, SNAP benefits were drastically reduced. If we compare the first quarter of 2020 (FY) to the first quarter of 2023 (FY), the Northeast Iowa Food Bank in some programs saw a 60% increase in the number of households served. Enacting this bill, would drastically impact food banks and food pantries in the state, in a negative way. This needs to be a public private partnership, SNAP should be a safety net for people who need it. We are encouraged, that the food choice part of the bill may be stripped. Life happens for people and there are things they can't control. Families should have access to SNAP when they need it most and be able to make the choices they want.

Name: Karen Pratte

Comment: Let me get this straight. You legislators just gave away close to a billion dollars to parents sending their children to religious private schools (no strings attached, no means testing) but now plan to make it harder for struggling families to receive SNAP (most of whom are the disabled, elderly, and children). You want SNAP recipients to prove their "need" for food then limit the food they can buy. You giving to the upper middle class and wealthy while taking from the poor is worse than a double standard. It is down right cruel and immoral.

Name: Diane Duncan-Goldsmith

Comment: I am wondering what evidence based data and facts Representative Grassley and the

other Representatives have used to justify changing the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Food (SNAP) package to one designed for families of Women, Infants and Children (up to age 5) i.e. WIC, families who are also eligible for food stamps when crafting H.F. 3, An Act relating to public assistance program integrity. As the Representatives know, SNAP benefits are fully funded by the federal government, and the state only covers half of the administrative costs. According to the USDA, Iowa paid a little over \$22 million in 2020, a state which has cut corporate tax rates and whose governor brags about the states almost \$2 billion budget surplus. Representative Grassley stated But I think there needs to be some level of accountability, and make sure that theyre really things that should qualify. If you dont lead a healthy lifestyle, that leads to more use of the (governmentfunded) services. I hope Representative Grassley can explain how eliminating key sources of high quality proteins, i.e. beef, pork, chicken can lead to a helpful diet, not to mention eliminating other food staples. In addition to drastically altering the eligible foods, this bill includes additional levels accountability of which adds more levels of oversight and reporting such as identity authorization and asset testing which proponents of this proposal argue is needed to limit fraud. Again, could Grassley and his colleagues provide data to backup these accusations of extensive fraud? Trying to decrease the number of families who receive SNAP benefits may also directly impact children whose eligibility to received free school meals is automatically approved through direct certification. How does this help address hunger in Iowa. For several years I have volunteered at the CommUnity Food Bank in Johnson County. I have seen how many families rely on the food bank for their weekly groceries. For the GOP members of the House who have introduced this piece of legislation to think families in Iowa do not need help when it comes to providing food for their families is just ridiculous. Bottom line, this is simply a mean GOP bill meant to save a few bucks which will in the end negatively impact families who are already struggling to make ends meet.

Name: Rita Carter

Comment: HF3 will take food away from Iowas children, and it shames Iowa families who live in poverty. How can we give taxpayer money away for school choice with no income eligibility limit, so our wealthiest families will be receiving schooling benefits, yet we seek to limit our poorest families from receiving food? Many public schools are even seeing the need to provide food for students through breakfast, weekend backpack programs, onsite food pantries, etc. We need to look for better ways to address poverty, not ways to limit food access through asset limits and more! Besides, most states have moved away from asset limits for SNAP, because asset limits have been shown to discourage people who are eligible from applying for SNAP, increase administrative costs, and discourage people from saving for emergencies. Even childrens savings accounts would count toward the asset limit for a household. HF3 is a meanspirited bill that needs to be opposed!

Name: Linda Gorkow

Comment: As an Iowa native and a child who depended on SNAP in my early life, I respectfully ask for all legislators to consider those who may not have a voice (many Iowans with one or two jobs trying to make ends meet, their children and the elderly who will be most affected by this bill). Barriers to accessing SNAP is not something I cannot support HF3. This bill and its previous versions have not moved forward because the wisdom of our legislators knowing the burden and negative impact of a bill such as HF3. SNAP brings FEDERAL FUNDS into Iowa to help feed food insecure Iowans who are doing their best to make ends meet while increasing sales for retailers across the state. Food banks are serving an exceptionally high number of Iowans needing food its at pandemic level. HF3 will only make the work of food banks harder. Please do not inhibit a wellrun SNAP program in our state. We work for all Iowans in our 99 counties. I know you want to nourish Iowans not penalize those who have food needs. Thank you for caring and listening to these experts who work with nourishing Iowans daily. A few specific items: HF 3 would require public assistance program

applicants to complete a computerized identity authentication questionnaire to receive benefits. While this may have the potential to increase access for some people (those with transportation or medical barriers, or without access to the required forms of identification), it also presents a significant access barrier to many people, especially those without internet access, limited credit history, or limited English proficiency. This requirement would go against USDA regulations for SNAP. Were this new computerized identity authentication process an option, not a requirement, it could have the potential to increase access for SNAP applicants and would be inline with USDA regulations. On asset tests Asset tests discourage work and prevent families from saving enough to secure safe housing (e.g. first & last month rent + security deposit) or reliable transportation (e.g. a used car). In the Pennsylvania case study, you could note that the biggest drop in participation came from seniors who were wary about giving out sensitive bank account information to the government. Regarding importance of car ownership for workers in a state like Iowa. You could also tie in inflation here to say workers shouldn't be penalized when car valuations just dramatically, as they did during the pandemic. On the various pieces of the bill around "eligibility checks" and data matching. HF 3 would direct the Department of Health and Human Services to complete realtime eligibility verification checks on SNAP participants. I must emphasize how this is carboncopy language not tailored to Iowa. Many of the data checks referenced already happen, and SNAP households are already required to frequently verify eligibility. The SNAP Program works and is an efficient program that brings FEDERAL FUNDS into the IOWA economy. Iowa Health and Human Services is doing an excellent job and Director Garcia has made incredible strides. We do not need to drown the agency in excessive alerts and paperwork actually hurts payment accuracy, potentially putting Iowa at risk of federal fines in the future. Requiring custodial parents to cooperate with the child support recovery unit or lose access to SNAP benefits: All of these state options have proven unpopular. According to the Department of Agriculture, only eight states currently implement any of the child support related disqualifications.²⁵ Many times a grandparent has taken on parental responsibilities. More than 2.5 million grandparents are raising their grandchildren.³⁶ Many are doing so informally, without official custody or foster care arrangements. A requirement for custodians to pursue child support would mandate that these grandparents seek payments from parents in order to be eligible for SNAP benefits. Some grandparents might forgo SNAP if they had concerns about the state pursuing the parents for child support. For example, a grandparent might not want to implicate a parent struggling with drug addiction or mental health issues in a child support enforcement action. Also, in cases involving prior abuse by a parent, the grandparent might fear for their own safety or the child's if they sought child support. And if a grandparent did seek child support, the parent might reclaim custody of the child which might not be in the child's best interest rather than pay support. It is not a one size fits all when we talk about Child support recovery. There should be some qualifying exemptions to ensure no child goes hungry.

Name: Piper Wood

Comment: Dear Subcommittee, My name is Piper Wood, and I am a constituent in rural Iowa, located near Decorah in Northeastern Iowa, and SNAP benefits have personally impacted my life. I am an AmeriCorps alum who served in the state for two years, and during that time I took a significant pay decrease to help my fellow Iowans through the Green Iowa AmeriCorps program during the height of the COVID19 pandemic. I was able to access SNAP benefits at the time because of the nonrestrictive asset limit, and it made it possible for me to serve my local community *and* access healthy food. Iowans should not have to choose between their livelihoods and food access, between their medical bills and food on the table, between gas in their car and a meal for their children. This House File extinguishes choice for Iowans in need, robs SNAP beneficiaries of their agency, and the restrictive asset limit is committed to keeping poor Iowans in poverty. I urge you to think about people like me, and fellow Iowans in need when you review the

provisions of this bill. We need educated, wellfed, and well cared for Iowans in order to be a state to be proud of. Sincerely, Piper Wood AmeriCorps Alumni Governor's Volunteer Award Recipient 2022 AmeriCorps Member Leadership Council Member

Name: Eric Fralick

Comment: Having worked in the food business for many years, I know how badly the SNAP program is needed, especially given our uneven economy, and how little it is abused by those it helps. As with all welfare, the greatest wish of all who benefit from it is to get off it as soon as possible so they can lead normal lives. Having SNAP conform to WIC guidelines, which are for nursing mothers and babies, is both cruel and nutritionally inadequate for most people, defeating the purpose of the program.

Name: Liz Dierolf

Comment: On behalf of the River Bend Food Bank, which serves 5 counties in eastern Iowa, we ask you to remove the provisions of the bill that have the potential to reduce SNAP eligibility for Iowas. The proposed legislation would establish one of the most restrictive asset limits for SNAP in the country and hurt rural Iowans. In addition, There is no evidence requiring custodial parents to cooperate with the child support recovery unit generates more child support payments to custodial households and could force those fleeing an abusive relationship back into harm's way. While we applaud the removal of the WIC requirements from the bill, we urge you to remove other harmful provisions from HF3 and focus on keeping those that would help families, like adding up to \$1M to Iowas Double Up Food Bucks program.

Name: Candella Foley-Finchem

Comment: (1) SNAP benefits were already based on income and resources. However, adding the individual's home and vehicle as their "resources" leaves out those who may have been home owners but are currently facing an income challenge (i.e., layoffs, changing job market, health requiring reduced hours/wages, or pregnancy/childbirth, childcare needs, to name only a few of the circumstances that can cause food insecurity)SNAP benefits are designed to feed the foodinsecure even if those individuals haven't always been in poverty. (2) By including the car and home, those families who live in areas without public transportation, or where public transportation doesn't meet their scheduling needs many families need more than one car in order to improve their lives and lift them out of poverty. Penalizing them for working to improve their lives and obtaining a second vehicle is a recipe to hold them hostage for food. (3) removing automatic reenrollment puts an undue burden on families who are already struggling. The extra chore of reapplying every quarter serves no purpose to the state other than knocking some recipients who struggle with managing executive tasks off the benefits and increasing food insecurity. It also creates undue burden for the workers who approve the applications as they have more work to treat every application as a "new" enrollee. (4) "Healthy behaviors" Seriously? Unless you are walking this talk, you're just a hypocrite. How many times do you go to the gym each week? Really, it's none of your business to know the exercise regimen or why an individual may be unable to complete an exercise regimen, and this is just additional hurdles and cruelty to the impoverished. (5) Most SNAP beneficiaries do work, as they are able, but the work requirements in this bill go beyond reasonable for some Again, the point of SNAP is to ensure that Iowans are able to EAT!!! you may have heard that whole "feed a man a fish, he eats for the day, but teach him to fish and he eats for a lifetime" and that is true, but it's also true that the hungry do not learn as quickly as the fed. Where is your compassion? Where is that Christianity that so many legislators seem to refer to when asked a question, but then this kind of bill? Stop with the cruelty! Ensure that Iowans are able to EAT! (6) apparently, you're also not aware of the challenges of going from broke and hungry to employed. For most jobs, there is no paycheck for the first 2 weeks, as most employers have at least a week's "Holdout" before the employee gets paid. By constricting SNAP benefits so tightly, you're increasing the number of food insecure

in Iowa, and reducing the overall health and wellbeing of our citizens. (7) This is just a rotten bill all the way through. It appears to be entirely focused on punishing the poor, reducing the number of eligible SNAP recipients from wanting to apply for this Federally funded support, and ensuring that our most vulnerable citizens decline in health and wellbeing. (8) If you follow the teachings of Jesus this bill is a slap to His face, who instructed us to feed the poor. If your goal is cruelty to the poor well, in that case, you've done quite well, and I hope you receive the karma you deserve for it.