

It's Time to Close the **SNAP**Gap

Reduce Hunger. Improve Health. Support the Economy.

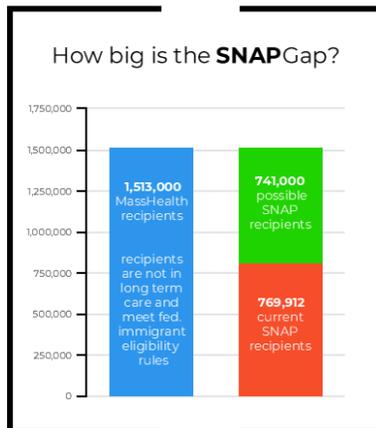
April 16, 2019

Please Cosponsor Rep. Jay Livingstone's Amendment #691

Amendment #691 takes a BIG step to closing the MA SNAP Gap in the FY20 Budget. The amendment language, attached would:

- require the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) to launch a *pilot* allowing both MassHealth and Medicare Savings Program (MSP) applicants with very low-income to initiate a SNAP application *at the same time* as their health care application or renewal, and to authorize EOHHS to share relevant eligibility and proofs with DA.
- task EOHHS with identifying the costs of implementing this initiative.

The "SNAP GAP" refers to the roughly 740,000 MassHealth individuals in Massachusetts with gross income under 150% federal poverty level (FPL), individuals likely eligible for SNAP but are not receiving this 100% federally funded benefit. This number does not include Medicare Savings Program (MSP) recipients with income between 100%-165% FPL who are also SNAP-eligible (SNAP goes up to 200% FPL). The average SNAP benefit for a household in MA is \$213 per month.



Ensuring that as many low-income families as possible have access to adequate food reduces health care costs, improves educational outcomes, and has long-term positive effects.

Allowing health care applicants to initiate an application for SNAP at the same time will boost state government efficiency, improve customer service and has the potential to bring over \$1.2B in federal nutrition dollars to low income Massachusetts residents.

House Members can sign onto Amendment #691 directly through the Laws system.

For More Information: Pat Baker, Mass Law Reform Institute pbaker@mlri.org or Jamie Klufits, National Association of Social Workers, NASW-MA jkluft@socialworkers.org,

Amendment #691 to H3800
Addressing Food Insecurity by Closing the SNAP Gap

Representatives Livingstone of Boston, Ashe of Longmeadow, Barber of Somerville, Barrett of North Adams, Blais of Sunderland, Brodeur of Melrose, Cabral of New Bedford, Cahill of Lynn, Capano of Lynn, Carey of Easthampton, Ciccolo of Lexington, Connolly of Cambridge, Domb of Amherst, Donahue of Worcester, Elugardo of Boston, Farley-Bouvier of Pittsfield, Ferrante of Gloucester, González of Springfield, Hecht of Watertown, Holmes of Boston, Honan of Boston, Keefe of Worcester, LeBoeuf of Worcester, Lewis of Framingham, Mahoney of Worcester, McGonagle of Everett, McKenna of Webster, Meschino of Hull, Miranda of Boston, Murray of Milford, O'Day of West Boylston, Puppolo of Springfield, Sabadosa of Northampton, Schmid of Westport, Santiago of Boston and Vega of Holyoke* moves to amend the bill, in Section 2, in item 4000-0300, by adding the following:-

"provided further, that the executive office shall establish a pilot to allow low-income applicants and recipients of MassHealth and Medicare Savings Program the option to initiate an application for federally-funded supplemental nutrition assistance benefits at the same time as their application or renewal for MassHealth or Medicare Savings Program; provided further, the executive office shall ensure that eligibility information and verifications provided by the applicant or recipient that are relevant to said nutrition program is transferred from MassHealth to the Department of Transitional Assistance for use in their determination of eligibility; provided further, the executive office shall provide a report no later than October 1, 2019 to the executive office of administration and finance and the house and senate committees for ways and means on the additional costs and federal reimbursement opportunities involved in a common application portal for all MassHealth and Medicare Savings Program applicants and recipients with gross incomes under 200% of the federal poverty level.

*co-sponsors as of 4/12/19