



February 7th, 2023

Haley Kottler, Campaign Director  
Kansas Appleseed Center for Law and Justice  
Verbal Testimony in Opposition to HB 2140  
House Committee on Welfare Reform

Members of the House Committee on Welfare Reform,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today on HB 2140. We oppose increasing the age range for Kansans categorized as “able bodied adults without dependents” to participate in work and training requirements in order to utilize SNAP. HB 2140 further creates undue burdens on low-income Kansans just trying to keep food on the table for themselves and their families.

Kansas Appleseed is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to the belief that Kansans, working together, can build a state full of thriving, inclusive and just communities. Kansas Appleseed has a long history of working to increase food security to all Kansans through SNAP food assistance as well as Child Nutrition Programs. Simply put, we work with Kansans everyday that struggle to navigate our systems for benefits that are meant specifically for them, and yet this bill will continue to make the process even more difficult.

With 1 in 10 Kansans– and 1 in 7 Kansas Kids– facing food insecurity at this moment, it is imperative that we create more access to food for our neighbors and their families, not less.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as “food stamps,” is the largest food assistance program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Simply put, SNAP is our nation’s most critical anti-hunger program. SNAP helps out of poverty, supplementing them with extra resources to provide a nutritious and adequate diet. SNAP was one of the key programs used to mitigate the damaging impact of COVID in 2020. SNAP benefits are an essential part of many food insecure Kansans budgets. Research demonstrates that greater access to SNAP results in reduction in hunger, improved dietary intake, improved academic performance, improved mental health, improved economic self-sufficiency, improved local economies, improved job growth, and reduction of poverty.<sup>1</sup>

With this bill, Kansans aged 50-59 already struggling to put food on the table would be subject to a 30-hour-per-week work requirement. Some ideas behind increased work requirements are that some individuals will only work if they are forced to do so– but this myth is simply not true. Kansans who need access to the SNAP food assistance program often work low-wage jobs with inconsistent hours– leaving them to make impossible decisions like choosing between paying the electric bill or putting food on their table.

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<sup>1</sup> Grafton, H. “The Role of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Improving Health and Well-Being.” Food Research & Action Center. 2017. <https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/hunger-health-role-snap-improving-health-well-being.pdf>



Additionally, there is no evidence showing that implementation of work and training requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents creates significant increases in employment.<sup>2</sup> Work rates are high among SNAP households that can work. More than half of SNAP households with at least one working-age, non-disabled adult work while receiving SNAP.<sup>3</sup>

There is much to do to ensure Kansans can live healthy and fulfilled lives. Rather than expanding work requirements for more Kansans, why can't we take advantage of strengthening our safety net programs to help individuals and their families weather hard and difficult times they may come across?

Thank you for your time and consideration, I look forward to continuing work with this committee to ensure all Kansans can thrive.

Haley Kottler  
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<sup>2</sup> Meko, Tim. "The Impact of SNAP Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) Time Limit Reinstatement in Nine States." *Urban Institute*, [http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/104451/the-impact-of-snap-able-bodied-adults-without-dependents-abawd-time-limit-reinstatement-in-nin\\_0.pdf](http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/104451/the-impact-of-snap-able-bodied-adults-without-dependents-abawd-time-limit-reinstatement-in-nin_0.pdf). Accessed 5 February 2023.

<sup>3</sup> LaDonna Pavetti, "Work Requirements Don't Cut Poverty, Evidence Shows," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, updated June 7, 2016, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/work-requirements-dont-cut-poverty-evidence-shows>.