



American  
Heart  
Association.

Feb 7, 2023

Representative Francis Averkamp, Chair  
House Committee on Welfare Reform  
Re: HB 2140, Opponent

I am writing on behalf of the American Heart Association (The Association) regarding HB 2140, which would create barriers for those accessing the SNAP food assistance program. SNAP benefits are 100% federally funded. If passed, HB 2140 will result in a loss of food access for Kansans. We believe the legislature should be improving access for these programs. **The Association opposes HB 2140 for the following reasons:**

- SNAP plays a crucial role in reducing poverty in America.
  - SNAP removed 8.4 million people from poverty in 2015.<sup>i</sup>
- SNAP beneficiaries are truly the poorest among us.
  - SNAP households with gross monthly income less than or equal to 50% of the Federal poverty guidelines received 56% of all benefits. This is approximately \$822 monthly for a family of two.<sup>ii</sup>
- SNAP benefits have a bigger impact on rural communities.<sup>iii</sup> SNAP benefits free up money that would otherwise be spent on food.

Additionally, HB 2140 contributes to negative perceptions of Kansans who rely on these programs to provide for themselves and their families. These are stroke and cardiac caregivers, people living with cardiovascular disease and diabetes, folks recovering from strokes, low-income families that rely on food assistance for overall wellbeing and good mental health. We respectfully request that you do not advance this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kari A. Rinker".

Kari Rinker  
Government Relations Director, Kansas  
American Heart Association  
[Kari.rinker@heart.org](mailto:Kari.rinker@heart.org)

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<sup>i</sup> Wheaton L, Tran V. The Antipoverty Effects of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Urban Institute; February 2018. <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/antipoverty-effects-supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program>.

<sup>ii</sup> Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Policy Basics: Introduction to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). March 2016. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/policy-basics-the-supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>.

<sup>iii</sup> [https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/102287/err-296\\_summary.pdf?v=5769.6](https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/102287/err-296_summary.pdf?v=5769.6)