

Date: March 8, 2022

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Subject: Opposition to Senate Bill 501 – Committee on Public Health and Welfare

To: Chairman Hilderbrand and Members of the Committee

I am an ambassador for Harvesters Community Food Network. I got involved with this organization in 2004 because I believe every individual in our society should have this basic human need (food security), especially, kids and the elderly.

I'm submitting this testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 501.

I have talked to some of the food insecure Kansans at food distribution events over the years and listen to the difficult choices they have to make. They only want a helping hand not a handout. I have learned about the negative impact food insecurity has on kids' health and learning abilities. If people in need of help can't get it, ultimately it will cost the Kansas taxpayers and society more.

Kansas' food insecurity rate is already 12.1% (more than 350,000 people) and SB 501 will make it worse.

- The Kansas SNAP application is 16 pages long.
- Every SNAP application costs the state \$46.62 because of the amount of paperwork and documentation that's already required.
- SB 501 will require additional paperwork for SNAP recipients.
- The SNAP fraud rate is less than 1 %.
- 2/3 of SNAP recipients can't or aren't expected to work (children, the elderly, the disabled).
- SB 501 will increase food insecurity and put additional pressure on Kansas' emergency food pantries, churches and community centers in rural and urban communities throughout the state.

I am asking for your compassionate consideration and vote in opposition to this bill that will

- Make the hole deeper to climb out for food insecure, working poor families trying to build a better life for themselves, by adding more bureaucratic red tape to receive **help**.
- Put additional pressure on community food pantries trying to help their neighbors.
- Do nothing to reduce food insecurity for Kansans.