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January 24, 2023

Chairman [Francis Averkamp](#)

House Welfare Reform Committee

Re: HB 2140

Good afternoon Chairman [Averkamp](#) and members of the House Committee on Welfare Reform. My name is Glenda DuBoise and I am the AARP Kansas State Director.

AARP has more than 278,000 members in Kansas. We are a non-profit, non-partisan organization that works across Kansas to strengthen communities and advocate for issues that matter most to families, such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in opposition to HB 2140.

- Nationally, nearly 9.5 million (or about 8% of) adults ages 50 and older are food insecure (as of 202) – meaning they lack consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy lifestyle.
 - In Kansas, more than 65,000 (6.5%) adults age 50 and older are food insecure
- Food insecurity has significant negative impacts on older adults and food assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is critically important for low-income older adults for these reasons:
 - Older adults who are food insecure are more likely than their food-secure counterparts to have limitations on activities of daily living, have conditions like diabetes and depression, and experience heart attacks.
 - Research shows that SNAP enrollment among older adults is associated with fewer hospital and emergency room visits and long-term care admissions. Enrolling in SNAP can also lead to increased well-being, especially among older adults.

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- While many low-income older adults rely on SNAP to help afford the groceries they need, participation in SNAP among eligible older adults is already low, despite the program's benefits.
 - A 2022 report from AARP and Mathematica estimates that 16 million—or over 60 percent of—eligible adults ages 50 and older were not enrolled in the program in FY 2018.
 - Reasons for the low participation rate include, social isolation and disconnection from resources, a confusing application process, and barriers such as discomfort with technology.
- Increasing barriers to SNAP, including through work requirements as proposed in this bill, would make it even harder for struggling seniors to participate in the program and even harder for them to afford the groceries they need to live healthy, active lives.
- Loss of these crucial benefits due to a senior's inability to meet these requirements would be devastating for those who are currently struggling, particularly during a time when inflation and rising food prices are stretching household budgets in ways that make it harder to put food on the table.

Therefore, we ask that you not support HB 2140.

Respectfully,



Glenda DuBoise