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**MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT**

**LEGISLATIVE** S.665 – by Senator May – Social Services Committee  
**REFERENCE** A.1318 – by M. of Gonzalez-Rojas – Social Services Committee

**TITLE** **AN ACT** to amend the social services law, in relation to establishing a state SNAP minimum benefit program.

**SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS**

This bill would amend section 95-b of the social services law by adding a new section establishing a state Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (“SNAP”) minimum benefit program. Under this program, the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (“OTDA”) would distribute a monthly state SNAP benefit to eligible households in an amount equal to the difference between the household’s federal SNAP monthly benefit and one hundred dollars. The bill would allow OTDA to increase the benefit amount as deemed appropriate and would require that federal funds be utilized as the primary source of financing when available. Additionally, the bill would require OTDA to apply to the food and nutrition service within the federal department of agriculture for any necessary waivers or approvals to implement the provisions of this section. The bill would also require the program to follow state rules and procedures for implementing federal SNAP to the maximum extent practicable.

**REASONS FOR SUPPORT**

The City of New York strongly supports this legislation, recognizing the crucial role a state SNAP minimum benefit program would play in combating food insecurity, reducing poverty, and strengthening local economies.

Every month, more than 1.8 million low-income New Yorkers—the majority of whom are children, older adults, and people with disabilities—rely on SNAP benefits to afford food. Statewide, this number is approximately 2.8 million people. However, these benefits fall short of what is needed to maintain a healthy diet, with New York City households receiving, at most, just over \$8 per person per day.

At the same time, food insecurity rates remain high, affecting nearly 15% of New Yorkers, with 40% of adults at risk of food insecurity. This has been exacerbated by the expiration of pandemic-era SNAP benefits and rising grocery prices.

Moreover, SNAP is a powerful tool to fight poverty. Between 2014 and 2018, SNAP lifted 556,000 New Yorkers above the poverty line annually, including 218,000 children. These benefits extend well beyond individual families, acting as a powerful economic engine. According to the USDA, every \$1 billion invested in SNAP generates \$1.54 billion in GDP, supporting 13,560 jobs and generating \$32 million in farm income.

The economic impact is particularly vital to New York's agricultural sector. In New York State, 201 regional farmers selling at 132 farmers markets rely on SNAP to sustain their operations. Additionally, many grocery stores and bodegas rely on SNAP revenues, with approximately 87% of SNAP benefits being redeemed at super stores, supermarkets, and small, medium, and large format grocery stores.

Establishing a state minimum SNAP benefit program is a critical step to combat hunger statewide. This is an important investment in healthier communities, stronger economies, and a more resilient New York.

Accordingly, the Mayor urges the earliest possible favorable consideration of this proposal by the Legislature.

Respectfully submitted,

SHANNA F. WITHERSPOON  
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