

The Honorable Maura Healey
Governor of Massachusetts
Massachusetts State House, 24 Beacon St.
Office of the Governor, Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Kim Driscoll
Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts
Massachusetts State House, 24 Beacon St.
Office of the Lt. Governor, Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

February 18, 2025

Dear Governor Healey and Lieutenant Governor Driscoll,

The undersigned 48 organizations write to seek your support to address an urgent issue facing low-income families in the Commonwealth: SNAP theft due to EBT card skimming.

Since June 2022, thieves who skimmed EBT card information have stolen over \$13 million in SNAP benefits from about 27,000 Massachusetts families – putting their nutrition and economic stability at risk. Organized criminal rings and other thieves have developed increasingly sophisticated methods to steal SNAP from EBT accounts.

Congress previously authorized federal funds to replace most stolen SNAP between October 1, 2022 through December 20, 2024. But Congress recently ended federal funding for replacement of benefits stolen after December 20, 2024 - despite the fact EBT card skimming schemes persist and continue evolving to target low-income consumers. EBT cards remain especially vulnerable to theft because, unlike most other credit and debit cards, they lack chip/tap technology.

Each month, about 1,500-2,000 MA families learn their monthly federal food benefits have been stolen. Families report to us that this theft plunges them into economic distress, reduces food security, and forces them to make sacrifices to put food on the table - skipping meals, incurring debt, using rent funds, or missing bill payments. As community organizations, we are left in the disheartening position of telling victims of theft there are no options to get their stolen food dollars back.

Certainly, Massachusetts cannot address all gaps in federal funding - but Massachusetts has a duty to protect low-income consumers by replacing stolen SNAP and transitioning to chip-enabled EBT cards that put Massachusetts SNAP families on equal footing with other consumers in the checkout line. This small investment will pay off - protecting millions of taxpayer dollars and ensuring SNAP meets its intended goal of reducing hunger and hardship.

We appreciate your commitment to making sure no child goes hungry in Massachusetts, including your past support of state funds to replace stolen SNAP. By replacing stolen SNAP and implementing chip EBT cards, Massachusetts can continue to be a national leader in both protecting food insecure households and safeguarding taxpayer dollars.

We respectfully request that the Healey Administration provide \$5 million in a FY25 supplemental budget to replace stolen SNAP benefits. We also urge the Administration to allocate funding for replacement and for DTA to move quickly towards implementing chip EBT cards in FY26.

Please contact Vicky Negus at MLRI (vnegus@mlri.org) with any questions. Thank you for your leadership on addressing hunger in the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

The undersigned organizations:

*Allston-Brighton Health Collaborative
Amherst Survival Center
Ascentria
Association for the Relief of Aged Women
Cambridge Economic Opportunity
Committee (CEOC)
Casa Myrna Vasquez
Children's HealthWatch
Citizen for Citizens
Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester
Community Action Agency of Somerville,
Inc.
Community Resource Initiative
Community Servings
Disability Law Center, Inc.
Economic Mobility Pathways, EMPATH
Everett Community Growers
Food Bank of Western Massachusetts
Food Link
Grow Food Northampton
Horizons For Homeless Children
Huntington Food Pantry
Jewish Family & Children's Service
Just Roots
La Colaborativa
Legal Key Partnership for Health and
Justice*

*Mass General Brigham
Massachusetts Councils on Aging
Massachusetts Food System Collaborative
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Merrimack Valley Food Bank, Inc.
MetroWest Food Collaborative
Metrowest Legal Services
National Association of Social Workers, MA
Chapter
North Shore WIC
Project Bread
Quincy Community Action Programs, Inc.
Riverbend
Rosie's Place
SEIU Local 509
Solidarity Lowell
St. Anthony's Food Pantry, Worcester
Stavros ILC
The Greater Boston Food Bank
The Marion Institute, Inc.
The Open Door
United Neighbors of Fall River
Wellspring Multi Service
Worcester County Food Bank
YMCA of Greater Boston
YMCA Southcoast*

Cc:

Secretary of Health and Human Services Kate Walsh
Department of Transitional Assistance Commissioner Jeffrey McCue