



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 1222		DATE: 3/4/2025	
COMMITTEE: Government Efficiency			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. AC "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF, STATE PUBLIC ADV		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: 3/4/2025 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JAMES HARRIS		PHONE NUMBER: 573-761-7875	
REPRESENTING: FGA ACTION		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 122 E HIGH STREET, SUITE 200			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/4/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: TIMOTHY FABER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: tfaber@mobaptist.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/3/2025 3:48 PM
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This is a bill that should receive bi-partisan support. We all want to help our neighbors who are in need. But if we are honest, nobody “needs” candies and soft drinks. And in fact, we are talking about a supplemental “nutrition” program are we not? Candies and soft drinks are not nutrition....I understand there are many folks who “want” such things, but wants are different than needs. If families are ever going to break the cycle of poverty and be free from the government dole – which is the objective, right? – then making sure they have what they need is legitimate, but providing for their wants does not further that objective. In fact, leaving folks short of their wants is more likely to stir ambition and motivation for them to go out and procure the means of providing those wants.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ANTHONY STEMATZ-BREITLING		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: stembreit@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/3/2025 8:02 PM
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I strongly oppose bill HB 1222 prohibiting the purchase of "candy" and "soft drinks" with SNAP and TANF benefits. While promoting healthier choices is important, the bill's overly broad definitions unfairly classify essential food items as restricted items. The bill defines "candy" as any food product containing sugar, honey, or other sweeteners in combination with chocolate, fruit, or nuts in bar, drop, or pieces. This definition unfairly includes nutrient-dense protein bars, granola bars, and fruit-and-nut bars—staples for families looking for affordable, shelf-stable sources of protein and energy. Similarly, the bill defines "soft drinks" as any nonalcoholic beverage with added sweeteners, except for those that contain milk or milk products; soy, rice, or similar milk substitutes; or contain greater than fifty percent vegetable or fruit juice by volume. This means that electrolyte drinks, flavored waters, and some teas would all be considered soft drinks, despite being commonly consumed by children and adults for hydration and nutrition. These sweeping definitions make little distinction between highly processed sugary products and healthier alternatives that happen to contain minimal sweeteners. This bill does not account for the lived realities of low-income families. It enforces arbitrary restrictions that misclassify essential food products and will ultimately make grocery shopping more difficult for those already facing financial hardship. For low-income families, affordability matters more than rigid nutrition policies. Grocery prices continue to rise, and many healthier alternatives are significantly more expensive. Rather than focusing on restrictive policies and banning widely used items, a more effective approach would be to expand access to affordable, healthier food options within SNAP & TANF; Price controls for nutritious foods would make a far greater impact than prohibitions that stigmatize and burden struggling families.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: CHRISTINE WOODY		PHONE NUMBER: 314-503-7277	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: EMPOWER MISSOURI		TITLE: FOOD SECURITY MANAGER	
ADDRESS:			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/4/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: DAN SHAUL		PHONE NUMBER: 314-378-4363	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI GROCERS ASSOCIATION		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 1539 ARLINGTON HEIGHTS WAY			
CITY: IMPERIAL		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63052
EMAIL: dshaul@missourigrocers.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person		SUBMIT DATE: 3/4/2025 12:05 PM

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This bill will have a negative effect on the grocery industry if done on a state level.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: GREGORY HARGIS		PHONE NUMBER: 417-872-9955	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: OZARKS COCA-COLA/DR. PEPPER BOTTLING CO.		TITLE: GENERAL COUNSEL	
ADDRESS: 1777 N. PACK RD.			
CITY: SPRINGFIELD		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65803
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/4/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JAMIE SKINNER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: ryanandjamieskinner@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person		SUBMIT DATE: 3/4/2025 12:56 PM
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Objections to Missouri House Bill 1222, which aims to prohibit the use of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for purchasing certain foods (such as candy and soft drinks), typically fall into several categories:

- Impact on Low-Income Individuals** • Critics argue that restricting SNAP purchases unfairly targets low-income individuals by limiting their personal food choices in ways that wealthier individuals do not experience. • The bill assumes that SNAP recipients make poor nutritional choices, which can be seen as paternalistic and stigmatizing.
- Practical Challenges in Implementation** • Enforcing such restrictions can be complex. Grocery stores would need to update their systems to block specific products, which could lead to errors and confusion at checkout. • Defining what qualifies as “candy” or a “soft drink” can be complicated, as some products may have nutritional value despite being categorized as such.
- Minimal Impact on Public Health** • While the bill is framed as a public health measure, studies suggest that banning certain foods from SNAP may not significantly change dietary habits. People may still purchase unhealthy foods with non-SNAP funds or substitute with other high-calorie, processed items. • A more effective approach might be incentives for purchasing healthier foods rather than restrictions on certain items.
- Administrative Costs** • Implementing and enforcing new SNAP restrictions could increase administrative costs for the state and retailers, potentially outweighing any intended benefits. • States that have attempted similar policies have faced logistical and financial burdens in enforcement.
- Slippery Slope Concerns** • Opponents fear that if restrictions start with candy and soft drinks, future legislation could expand to other foods, further limiting choice and autonomy for SNAP recipients. • This could lead to a broader debate on whether the government should regulate food choices for individuals receiving public benefits.



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JARED HANKINSON		PHONE NUMBER:	
REPRESENTING: MO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 428 EAST CAPITOL AVENUE			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65201
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/4/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JORDAN MIZE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: jordan.mize@coxcollege.edu	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/3/2025 2:18 PM
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As a registered dietitian, I oppose Missouri's HB1222 because it undermines the dignity and autonomy of SNAP recipients while failing to address the root causes of food insecurity and poor nutrition. Restricting the purchase of candy and soft drinks does not improve health outcomes but instead places additional burdens on individuals already facing financial and food access challenges. Rather than restricting choice, lawmakers should invest in programs that empower SNAP recipients with the resources and education needed to make informed, sustainable dietary decisions.



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: KATIE GAMBLE		PHONE NUMBER: 573-634-4876	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI BEVERAGE ASSOCIATION		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1865			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65102
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/4/2025 12:00 AM	

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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: KIMBERLY BUCKMAN		PHONE NUMBER: 660-833-8939	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: FEEDING MISSOURI		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 2306 BLUFF CREEK DRIVE			
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65201
EMAIL: kim@feedingmissouri.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/4/2025 10:49 AM
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My name is Kim Buckman, and I'm with Feeding Missouri, which collectively represents the largest charitable response to hunger in our state. Our extensive network consists of six regional Feeding America food banks and over 1,200 community and faith-based partner agencies that work tirelessly to address hunger and improve access to nutritious food for nearly 925,000 Missourians facing food insecurity, including over 250,000 children. Feeding Missouri strongly opposes the proposed provisions in HB 1222. While the intention of this legislation—to improve health outcomes—is commendable and aligns with our mission to enhance access to nutrition for those facing hunger, we believe HB 1222 could lead to several unintended consequences. They could exacerbate food insecurity (known to cause a litany of health issues) for low-income households that rely on SNAP benefits, including over 418,000 seniors, children, and adults with disabilities. Improving the consumption of healthier food options is undoubtedly a worthy goal, but defining what constitutes "healthier" is complicated. The broadness of the proposed definition of "candy"—which describes it as "a food product containing sugar, honey, or artificial sweeteners in combination with chocolate, fruit, nuts, or other ingredients in the form of bars, drops, or pieces"—is an example of the difficulty legislators will face trying to create a universal definition that participants and retailers understand. Is a whole grain cereal containing nuts and honey included in the list of ineligible products because it has pieces? Are slices considered pieces? If slices are pieces, does that include bread slices - since store-bought breads often include sugar or honey in combination with other ingredients? The vague guidelines and difficulties in defining them put us at risk of eliminating access to important nutritional sources for many individuals—including certain granola bars, protein bars, and other items that might qualify as "candy" but may be an essential source of nutrition, and deemed "healthier" options, especially for those with dietary restrictions or allergies. Additionally, the legislation does not effectively address the real issues at hand—food access and affordability. Many rural communities fall within one of Missouri's 100 food deserts—geographically designated areas where residents have limited access to affordable and nutritious food. As a result, many residents rely on convenience stores or smaller retailers, where their options can be very limited. Restricting what they can purchase with their SNAP benefits essentially denies them the ability to procure items that may provide them with just enough energy to get by until they can afford to travel to a location with more options, which in some cases may be an hour away, and potentially forces them to go without. The proposed measures would not only impact participants of the SNAP program, but they could also have broader implications for the economy and accessibility for all residents in rural communities. These areas already face significant challenges in retaining retailers and making it more difficult for small businesses could exacerbate existing hardships. The potential loss of these retailers would reduce access to essential goods and services, further complicating the economic landscape for everyone living in these areas. Rather than imposing

restrictions, we should be exploring opportunities like the DoubleUp Bucks program, which incentivizes healthy food purchases and enhances local economies. These initiatives not only promote healthier eating but also support our community's small businesses, ensuring that SNAP dollars are spent where they can have the most meaningful impact on the recipients and our local economies. We urge you all to reconsider the implications of HB 1222 and work towards solutions that support food access, encourage healthier food choices, and genuinely assist our neighbors in need. Thank you for your time and consideration. We stand ready to answer any questions this committee may have.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: KORTNIE HUDDLESTON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: kortniehuddleston@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/4/2025 10:58 PM
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I stand in firm opposition to House Bill 1222, which seeks to exclude candy and soft drinks from SNAP eligibility. While I respect the intent to promote healthier choices, this bill is a misguided and harmful approach that undermines the dignity of Missourians struggling with food insecurity. SNAP's purpose is to alleviate hunger, not to police personal dietary decisions. This bill strips low-income families of autonomy, implying they are incapable of making informed choices—a paternalistic stance that perpetuates stigma. Parents, seniors, and disabled individuals on SNAP deserve the same agency as all Missourians to prioritize their household needs. Moreover, the bill's definitions are arbitrary and unworkable. Is a protein bar with chocolate “candy”? What about a 49%-juice beverage? Such ambiguity will burden retailers and create confusion, while USDA compliance costs could divert resources from critical anti-hunger programs. There is no evidence that restricting SNAP purchases improves health outcomes. Studies show SNAP recipients purchase sugary items at rates similar to other consumers. If enacted, families may simply buy these goods with cash, rendering the policy ineffective. True health equity requires expanding access to affordable produce, nutrition education, and healthcare—not punishing poverty with restrictive bans. Finally, this bill distracts from systemic issues. Over 700,000 Missourians face food insecurity. Instead of micromanaging grocery carts, let us address root causes: stagnant wages, food deserts, and inadequate safety nets. I urge you to reject HB 1222. Let us empower—not police—our neighbors in need.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL DREYER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: mdreyer93@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/4/2025 10:57 PM
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: RON LEONE		PHONE NUMBER: 573-864-5189	
REPRESENTING: MPCA- MO PETROLEUM & CONVENIENCE ASSN.		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 205 E. CAPITOL AVE. SUITE 200			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/4/2025 12:00 AM	

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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: WHITNEY MINOR		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: whitneysbooknook@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/3/2025 11:38 PM
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Thank you for your time. For the vast majority of my life, I have not had any type of government assistance. I have heard people talk about various things that should not be allowed with SNAP benefits, but I personally feel like people should be allowed to make their own choices. If someone wants candy or soda, they should be able to get it. Now, for the part of my life that I was on food stamps...after my parents divorced, my mom qualified for food stamps for a short while. I was always the money conscious oldest child, so I would not ask for extras on shopping trips...even when my mom would ask if I wanted anything. When we finally got food stamps, I was sooooo excited that we could get...Gushers. My sister and I thought this shopping trip was amazing (so much so that I remember it practically 30 years later; we thought Gushers were something only rich families purchased). I am sure my mom loved seeing our joy, but I know asking for help is not always easy. If little Whitney was so excited for Gushers, I imagine some other families could find joy in getting some candy or soda. And who are we to deny them that treat?