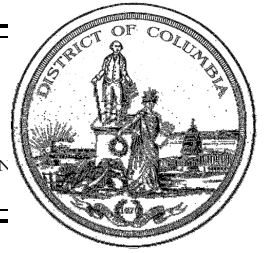

OFFICE OF MARY M. CHEH

COUNCILMEMBER, WARD 3

CHAIR, COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & THE ENVIRONMENT



INTRODUCTION OF SNAP EXPANSION ACT OF 2010

MARCH 16, 2010

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Today I am introducing the SNAP Expansion Act of 2010 along with Councilmember Michael A. Brown.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), more commonly known as food stamps, is a federally-funded program that helps low-income people and families buy the food they need for good health.

The United States Department of Agriculture permits states to choose from a variety of policy options when implementing SNAP. My legislation would expand the District's SNAP program by adopting three policy options:

1. **Transition Benefits:** The USDA permits states to provide SNAP benefits for five months after households stop receiving TANF (welfare) benefits. This policy choice helps the poor obtain food while transitioning off government assistance. Nineteen states, including New York, Maryland, and Virginia, have enacted this policy.
2. **Standard Housing Deduction for the Homeless:** The USDA permits states to use a standard income deduction of \$143 for homeless participants in SNAP, which increases benefits for the homeless. Twenty-seven states, including New York, Maryland, and Virginia, have enacted this policy.
3. **Simplified Self-Employment Determination:** The USDA permits states to simplify the process of determining self-employment costs, which increases benefits for the self-employed. Sixteen states, including California and Maryland, and Virginia, have enacted this policy.

These policy options were recommended by DC Hunger Solutions, the Capital Area Food Bank, and the Fair Budgets Coalition. **Because the federal government reimburses the District 100% for SNAP payments, adopting these policy changes will not have a fiscal impact** (other than the nominal administrative cost of implementation).

At a time when many District residents are being severely affected by this difficult economy, this bill will help us to provide more benefits for needy residents and help them provide food for their families.

[Councilmember Michael A. Brown would like to speak for one minute on this bill.]

I invite co-sponsors.