

# Resolution No. 165-2020

**Council Member Griffin**

## AN EMERGENCY RESOLUTION

Strongly urging the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to withdraw its request to the U.S. Department of Agriculture asking to eliminate the work requirements exemption for SNAP and Medicaid benefits for certain counties in Ohio that are currently exempt, including Cuyahoga County.

WHEREAS, the State of Ohio, through its Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), has requested the U.S. Department of Agriculture to eliminate the work requirement waiver for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid benefits for certain counties in the state currently exempted from the work requirement, including Cuyahoga County; and

WHEREAS, due to the proposed changes to the federal regulations, the ODJFS has asked the federal government to reduce from 42 to 13 the number of counties currently exempted from the work requirement rule; and

WHEREAS, for counties not exempt from the work requirement rule, able-bodied adults without dependents must work, go to school, get work training or volunteer for 80 hours a month to qualify for food assistance; otherwise, they can only receive SNAP benefits for three months out of every three years; and

WHEREAS, eliminating the work requirement exemption for Cuyahoga County would have a disproportionate impact on African American families; and

WHEREAS, in Cleveland, over 33% of persons live in poverty and close to 36% receive SNAP benefits; one in two children under age 18, along with 22% of the elderly, live below the poverty level; and

WHEREAS, the proposed changes to the exemption would further exacerbate the challenge of food insecurity in our City; and

WHEREAS, this Council understands that food insecurity and poor nutrition leads to poorer health outcomes, which impacts life expectancy; moreover, food insecurity is a major source of chronic stress for communities of color and persons living in poverty; and prevention of chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease is contingent on individuals having access to healthy food; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the physical and emotional toll the elimination of the work waiver will cause our citizens, all of us will suffer the economic burden that poor health outcomes produce over time: increases in medical costs and loss of productivity associated with debilitating chronic illness and poor mental health; and

WHEREAS, the ODJFS must consider the far reaching implications of its decisions on the health and wellbeing of families in Cleveland and across the state - the health and quality of life of Cleveland's and Ohio's residents is at stake; and

WHEREAS, this resolution constitutes an emergency measure for the immediate preservation of public peace, property, health or safety, now, therefore,

### BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CLEVELAND:

**Section 1.** That this Council hereby strongly urges the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to withdraw its request to the U.S. Department of Agriculture asking to eliminate the work requirements exemption for SNAP and Medicaid benefits for certain counties in Ohio that are currently exempt, including Cuyahoga County.

**Section 2.** That the Clerk of Council is directed to transmit copies of this resolution to Governor Mike DeWine, Kimberly Hall, Director, ODJFS, Kevin Gowan, ODJFS Administrator, Cuyahoga County.

**Section 3.** That this resolution is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and, provided it receives the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to Council, it shall take effect and be in force immediately upon its adoption and approval by the Mayor; otherwise it shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

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**READ FIRST TIME on FEBRUARY 3, 2020**  
**and referred to DIRECTORS of Public Health, Law;**  
**COMMITTEES on Health and Human Services, Finance**

**REPORTS**

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**CITY CLERK**

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**READ SECOND TIME**

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**CITY CLERK**

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**READ THIRD TIME**

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**PRESIDENT**

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**CITY CLERK**

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**APPROVED**

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**MAYOR**

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## **REPORT after second Reading**

**PASSAGE RECOMMENDED BY  
COMMITTEE ON  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

FILED WITH COMMITTEE

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**PASSAGE RECOMMENDED BY  
COMMITTEE ON  
FINANCE**

FILED WITH COMMITTEE

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