

Yale SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
*Department of Health Policy and Management*

CHIMA D. NDUMELE, PHD  
*Assistant Professor of Health Policy*

PO Box 208034  
New Haven CT 06520-8034  
chima.ndumele@yale.edu  
publichealth.yale.edu/hpm

*courier*  
60 College Street, Suite 302  
New Haven CT 06510

Testimony Supporting

HB 1721: An Act Concerning Semi-Monthly Transfers of Supplemental Nutrition Benefits

Chima Ndumele, PhD, Assistant Professor of Health Policy

Yale University School of Public Health

Yale Institute for Social and Policy Studies

February 28, 2019

Dear Esteemed Members of the Committee on Human Services:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 1721: **An Act Concerning Semi-Monthly Transfers of Supplemental Nutrition Benefits**. I am testifying today as a nationally recognized expert in the administration, design, and financing of the social-safety net, with a particular focus on the Medicaid program.

Decades of social science research has shown that SNAP beneficiaries who receive distributions once a month have difficulty conserving their benefits for use throughout the month. The USDA reports that SNAP households redeem about 20 percent of their monthly benefit on the first day it is received and 80 percent of their monthly benefit at the end of two weeks. Recipients who exhaust their benefits early experience food insecurity leading to deficits in quantity and caloric quality of food consumed at the end of the month.

Food insecurity can have serious consequences, including the short-term pain of acute hunger and the long-term risks of developing chronic health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and stroke. For Connecticut residents with diabetes, an unfortunately common condition, food insecurity can make it difficult achieve blood sugar control. All of these conditions reduce the quality of life for Connecticut residents who are affected, but they also spillover onto the Medicaid program and other social service programs, raising costs for all taxpayers.

Prior research suggests that transitioning the administration of SNAP benefits to semi-monthly transfers will help beneficiaries husband their resources more carefully, reducing food insecurity at the end of the month. On this front, Connecticut is poised to lead the nation with an integrated, evidence-based approach to designing their safety-net. My colleagues and I at the Yale School of Public Health and the Institute for Social and Policy Studies would be very interested in assisting Connecticut in the design and evaluation of this landmark legislation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or need additional information. You can reach me at [chima.ndumele@yale.edu](mailto:chima.ndumele@yale.edu) or (203) 737-3379.

Sincerely,



Chima D. Ndumele, PhD