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The Honorable Alfonso H. Lopez
Virginia House of Delegates

The Honorable Charniele L. Herring, Majority Leader
Virginia House of Delegates

The Honorable Elizabeth Bennet-Parker
Virginia House of Delegates

The Honorable Adam P. Ebbin
Senate of Virginia

Dear Delegation Members,

On behalf of the City of Alexandria, I respectfully request your support for an expedited Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) study to assess the impact of the One Big Beautiful Bill (H.R. 1; P.L. 119-21) on the Commonwealth of Virginia.

H.R. 1—enacted in early July—places cuts and new conditions on lifesaving programs like Medicare and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Because of this bill, federal health and nutrition dollars that flow through state agencies, local governments, and directly to families are set to contract sharply. Georgetown University’s Center for Children and Families found that over 10 years, H.R. 1 will cut \$1.1 trillion in support for individuals who rely on the government to help pay for healthcare—increasing the number of uninsured individuals nationwide by more than 10 million by 2034.¹ For SNAP, analyses warn of higher out-of-pocket food costs and reduced benefits for millions of families, which historically translates into greater

¹ Georgetown University, McCourt School of Public Policy, Center for Families and Children, “Medicaid, CHIP, and Affordable Care Act Marketplace Cuts and Other Health Provisions in the Budget Reconciliation Law, Explained, July 22, 2025, https://ccf.georgetown.edu/2025/07/22/medicaid-chip-and-affordable-care-act-marketplace-cuts-and-other-health-provisions-in-the-budget-reconciliation-law-explained/?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

demand on states and at local food banks, schools, and city social-service agencies—and weaker local retail sales because SNAP is a fast, local economic stabilizer.²

The hasty enactment of H.R. 1 gave states and localities little time to analyze its sweeping provisions or plan for their effects, with some changes—like a 25% increase in the state’s share of SNAP administrative costs in addition to a loss of up to 15% of funding if a state’s payment error rate exceeds 6%. The Commonwealth of Virginia must act now to assess fiscal exposure, update outdated, legacy IT systems and processes, and strengthen local safety nets to blunt the bill’s impacts and protect vulnerable residents. And we need a data-driven roadmap to help us get there. That is why I write with urgency to request an expedited JLARC study.

Why This Matters for Alexandria

As of June 2025, 29,744 Alexandria residents are enrolled in Medicaid, including 6,641 through Medicaid Expansion. More than 12,000 Alexandria residents rely on SNAP to access food. These are children, working families, seniors, and individuals with disabilities—people for whom these programs are not just safety nets, but lifelines. Even a small administrative failure could result in eligible residents losing access to healthcare or meals.

By commissioning and expediting this JLARC study now, Virginia can take proactive, informed steps to prepare for these complex and unprecedented federal mandates and help protect the well-being of those who depend on these services. Without targeted investments and infrastructure readiness and program integrity, local governments like ours cannot manage the fallout. A JLARC will identify where investments are most needed and will be most effective in protecting Virginia’s vulnerable families and communities.

In particular, this study should evaluate whether Virginia’s information technology (IT), data-sharing infrastructure, and administrative systems are adequately prepared to implement the bill’s substantial and unfunded federal mandates—most notably changes to the Medicaid and SNAP programs so that qualifying recipients are not erroneously removed from lifesaving care and resources.

Scope and Objectives of the JLARC Study

1. Audit whether Virginia’s Medicaid Enterprise System (MES) and related platforms can accommodate forthcoming federal mandates, including:
 - A shift to twice-yearly eligibility re-determinations;
 - New work and community engagement reporting requirements for Medicaid expansion adults; and
 - Cost-sharing obligations for certain Medicaid expansion recipients.

² Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “By the Numbers,” June 30, 2025, https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/by-the-numbers-harmful-republican-megabill-takes-food-assistance-away-from?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

2. Evaluate whether the Commonwealth's systems, staffing levels, training protocols, and data-sharing mechanisms are equipped to manage the increased verification workload without disrupting access to essential services.
3. Determine SNAP Program Integrity and Error Rates, including an analysis of the root causes of Virginia's current SNAP payment error rate—reported at 11.5% in FY24—which far exceeds the 6% threshold established under P.L. 119-21. States that do not meet this benchmark by 2027 face severe financial penalties, placing critical benefits at risk.
4. Analyze Best Practices from other states to identify effective strategies to efficiently and effectively modernize eligibility systems and processes while protecting access for qualified beneficiaries.
5. Offer policy and budgetary recommendations for investments in system modernization, quality control, and staff training to help Virginia meet federal compliance targets.

While the expedited, longer-term JLARC study is getting underway, you may choose to focus the General Assembly's Committees on Appropriations and Finance on the more immediate financial effects of H.R. 1. You may also seek to have the Department of Planning and Budget report on the bill's economic impact on the Commonwealth. Understanding the short- and long-term implications of this legislation is critical to dampening its harmful effects on our communities.

The City of Alexandria stands ready to support this important effort with data, insights, and the stories of residents who will be directly affected. Please do not hesitate to contact Wendy Ginsberg, the City's Legislative Director, at wendy.ginsberg@alexandriava.gov with any questions.

Thank you for your continued leadership.

Respectfully,



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