



February 4, 2026

**Subject Line: Health Students Taking Action Together (H-STAT) Letter on HB 947**

The Honorable Robert Dickey  
Chairman  
Agriculture & Consumer Affairs Committee  
Georgia House of Representatives  
228-B State Capitol  
Atlanta, GA 30334

The Honorable Carolyn Hugley  
Vice Chairman  
Agriculture & Consumer Affairs Committee  
Georgia House of Representatives  
601-C Coverdell Legislative Office Building  
Atlanta, GA 30334

The Honorable David Huddleston  
Secretary  
Agriculture & Consumer Affairs Committee  
Georgia House of Representatives.  
612-G Coverdell Legislative Office Building  
Atlanta, GA 30334

The Honorable Doreen Carter  
Committee Member  
Agriculture & Consumer Affairs Committee  
Georgia House of Representatives  
509-G Coverdell Legislative Office Building  
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Chairman Dickey, Vice Chairman Campbell, Secretary Huddleston, and Representative Carter:

On behalf of Health Students Taking Action Together (H-STAT), we write to strongly oppose HB 947, the “Georgia SNAP Healthier Choices Act of 2026,” which was sponsored by Representative Martin Montahan and others, due to its negative impact on food security and public health efficiency in our state. [H-STAT](#) represents the collective voices of hundreds of healthcare students and trainees across Georgia who are dedicated to improving health outcomes for all citizens. We urge you to vote in opposition to this bill.

Our opposition to HB 947 is grounded in three key concerns regarding health efficacy, fiscal responsibility, and patient dignity:

- 1. Efficacy of Restrictions on Health Outcomes:** While the intention of HB 947 may be to encourage healthier eating habits, current evidence does not support the effectiveness of restricting SNAP purchases. A recent systematic review has shown that while restrictions may limit the intake of specific items, the research supporting the claim that this leads to lower obesity rates or better metabolic health is limited and inconsistent. As future healthcare providers, we prioritize evidence-based interventions. Restricting food choice without addressing the root causes of food insecurity, such as access to fresh food in food deserts, does not improve

population health and may inadvertently lead to [poorer nutritional outcomes](#) by limiting caloric access for vulnerable families.

2. **Increased State Costs and Administrative Burden:** Implementing the restrictions proposed in HB 947 would likely result in [significant financial strain](#) on the state and local businesses. SNAP restrictions require complex waivers from the USDA, which are rarely granted and costly to pursue. Furthermore, enforcing these restrictions places a heavy burden on Georgia retailers, requiring costly updates to Point-of-Sale (POS) systems to categorize thousands of food items. These administrative costs divert valuable state resources that could otherwise be invested in proven incentive programs, such as "[Georgia Fresh for Less](#)," which have a higher return on investment for both the local agricultural economy and public health.
3. **Stigma and Barriers to Care:** HB 947 risks [increasing the stigma](#) associated with government assistance, which creates a barrier to essential nutrition. Public health research highlights that restrictive policies often shame recipients at the checkout line, stripping them of autonomy and dignity. This stigmatization can deter eligible Georgians, including seniors and working families, from utilizing benefits they desperately need and increasing the [risk of food insecurity](#), a crisis already impacting many in the state. As healthcare trainees, we witness how stigma prevents patients from seeking care; codifying this stigma into food access laws will only exacerbate health disparities and food insecurity in our communities.

In conclusion, HB 947 imposes unnecessary administrative costs and barriers to food access without offering a proven benefit to public health. We urge policymakers to oppose HB 947 and instead prioritize evidence-based policies that incentivize healthy choices rather than restricting them.

Thank you for your consideration on the issue. We look forward to working with you to promote the health of Georgians. If you have any questions, please contact Nicholas Wilson, H-STAT Board Director, at [nicholas@healthstatgeorgia.org](mailto:nicholas@healthstatgeorgia.org), or Gem Johnson, H-STAT Board Member, at [gj3569@pcom.edu](mailto:gj3569@pcom.edu).

Sincerely,

Gem Johnson  
H-STAT Member  
Health Students Taking Action Together