



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Roxanne J. Persaud

Senate Social Services and Aging Committees Conduct Hearing on the Looming Impacts of Proposed Changes to Federal Food Stamp Program and Calculation of the Official Poverty Measure

ROXANNE J. PERSAUD October 21, 2019

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(Albany, NY) – On Monday, October 21, 2019, Senator Roxanne J. Persaud, Chair of the Senate Social Services Committee and Senator Rachel May, Chair of the Senate Aging Committee, convened a hearing to obtain witness assessments of how pending changes to the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and methodology used to determine Official Poverty Measure (OPM), will impact New York programs that assist populations served by the human services sector.

The Senators heard testimony from the following agencies and organizations:

- Michael P. Hein, Commissioner, NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA)
- Grace Bonilla, HRA Administrator, NYC Department of Social Services
- Michele McClave, Commissioner, Albany County Department of Social Services
- Gail Myers, Deputy Director, NY StateWide Senior Action Council
- Sherry Tomasky, Director - Communications and Public Affairs, Hunger Solutions New York
- Dede Hill, Director of Policy, Schuyler Center for Analysis & Advocacy

In addition, several organizations submitted written testimony.

“The testimony we received from state and local commissioners, advocates for New York’s seniors, anti-hunger and anti-poverty experts, brought forth an overwhelming wealth of knowledge about the current state of New York’s safety net,” said Senator Roxanne J. Persaud, Chair of the Senate Social Services Committee. “We heard loud and clear that vulnerable New Yorkers, particularly tens of thousands of young children and seniors, will bear the brunt of these misguided federal proposals. I look forward to working with our partners in government and advocacy groups to continue fighting to prevent these proposed changes.”

“Changes to federal guidelines on SNAP will have huge impacts in my district and across the state. Older New Yorkers and young children already face a multitude of challenges; we must protect them, and all vulnerable populations, from food insecurity and all its ramifications,” said Senator Rachel May, Chair of the Senate Aging Committee. “We heard testimony on the potential cascading affects these Federal changes will have in our communities. If people begin to shift their limited budgets to cover the costs of food, they may lose their homes, or their ability to get transportation or to cover other vital needs in their lives. We will see a ripple effect that will hurt the local stores and farmers markets where SNAP recipients shop and the New York farms that produce a good portion of their food. And we will see more children falling behind in school and more seniors losing their independence and requiring ever more expensive care. I am committed to working with my colleagues to speak out against this heartless, counterproductive policy.”