

U.S. Rep. Moore: Secures amendment in anti-poverty legislation to help vulnerable Americans fight food insecurity

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Today, Congresswoman Moore voted in support of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Modernization Act of 2022 to provide life-changing, poverty-alleviating resources to her constituents and millions across the country. Specifically, this legislation will reauthorize the CSBG Act for 10 years, better meeting the needs of low-income individuals by permanently raising income eligibility to 200% of poverty line, preserving local control of Community Action Agency (CAA) efforts, and ensuring these programs are effective using strong corrective and enforcement measures.

“My organizing principle has always been centered on uplifting those in poverty. I know what it’s like to be poor and I know that robust social safety net systems helped me get to Congress not, ‘pulling myself up by my bootstraps.’ I know that it often takes a lot more than a job and a strong work ethic to be pulled out of poverty.

That’s why I am a strong supporter of the Community Services Block Grant Act. Through Community Action Agencies like the Social Development Commission here in Milwaukee, this robust program provides vital resources to keep people in their homes, put food on the table, assist with energy bills, and provide education and job training opportunities that help residents build family-sustaining careers, among

many other activities. These efforts not only help families meet their most immediate needs but will set them up for long-term success.

While these programs continue to make a difference, especially for seniors, children, women, and people of color, too many still struggle with hunger in America. Food insecurity was especially high at the beginning of the pandemic and continues to be an issue, especially as the price of groceries has gone up. My amendment would enhance the anti-hunger initiatives through the Community Service Block Grant. I am pleased it was adopted and will continue to push to help end poverty in our communities.”

Background

In 1964, Congress first established the Community Action Program (CAP), the predecessor of Community Action Agencies (CAAs), to support locally driven anti-poverty programs as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson’s “War on Poverty.”

Today, CAAs—whose work is supported by the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)—form a network of more than 1,000 organizations that meet the unique needs of communities and help low-income individuals and families find their way out of poverty. CSBG is currently the only federal program with the overarching goal of reducing poverty, regardless of cause or condition. In 2019, alone, CAAs helped more than nine million individuals—including nearly five million families—achieve economic stability, secure meaningful employment and education, gain and improve job-related skills, obtain housing, and participate in their communities.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, CAAs have played a key role in providing crucial services for struggling Americans. For example, in response to stay-at-home orders, CAAs mobilized immediately to help communities access personal protective equipment, vaccines and other health services, and school supplies for remote learning.

Unfortunately, CSBG has not been reauthorized since 1998. We are long past due for Congress to pass a comprehensive reauthorization of this vital law.