

August 18, 2017

To the Honorable Members of
The Illinois House of Representatives,
100th General Assembly:

Today I return House Bill 3211 with specific recommendations for change.

This legislation addresses eligibility for certain college students to participate in the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which provides access to funds for food to eligible low-income individuals. Hunger is a very real challenge, and for students it can lead to an inability to participate in the very programs of study that will contribute to their future development and career opportunities. But this legislation goes further than is necessary to address this challenge.

One piece of this legislation utilizes the flexibility of this federal program to allow certain types of college students, who would normally be ineligible for this assistance, to access the SNAP program. Generally, full-time students are ineligible for this aid. However, this limited extension of eligibility to those in career and technical education programs that have strong records of placement into future employment is a reasonable way to help low-income students stay in the programs that historically lead to less reliance on government aid in their future. I support this part of the bill.

The second provision goes too far. With limited resources available, the SNAP identification and promotion process required by this legislation for adult college students who may already have a variety of resources available to identify their eligibility for government aid is not the highest and best use of these agencies' efforts.

Therefore, pursuant to Section 9(e) of Article IV of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby return House Bill 3211 entitled "AN ACT concerning public aid", with the following specific recommendations for change:

By replacing line 9 on page 1 through line 12 on page 2 with: "(a) (blank)."

With this change, House Bill 3211 will have my approval. I respectfully request your concurrence.

Sincerely,

Bruce Rauner
GOVERNOR