

MAKE AMERICA HEALTHY AGAIN KENTUCKY TASK FORCE

Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of the 2025 Interim

July 10, 2025

Call to Order and Roll Call

The second meeting of the Make America Healthy Again Kentucky Task Force was held on July 10, 2025, at 3:00 PM in Room 169 of the Capitol Annex. Representative Matt Lockett, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Shelley Funke Frommeyer, Co-Chair; Representative Matt Lockett, Co-Chair; Senators Donald Douglas, and Phillip Wheeler; and Representatives Emily Callaway, and Robert Duvall.

Guests: Senator Stephen Meredith; Senator Lindsey Tichenor; Allison Adams, President, Chief Executive Officer, Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky; Lesa Dennis, Commissioner, Department for Community Based Services (DCBS), Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS); Roger McCann, Director, Division of Family Support, DCBS, CHFS; Kelly McKenna, Chief Executive Officer, End Chronic Disease; Ty Beal, Global Nutrition Scientist, Head of Food Systems, Data and Analytics, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, Coalition Member, End Chronic Disease; Jordan Olijie, Advocacy Coordinator, Feeding Kentucky; Steve Richardson, Senior Market Director, G & J Pepsi-Cola Bottlers, Inc.; Dallas Clark, Chief Executive Officer, Chairman, C.C. Clark, Inc.; Fielding Rogers, Chief Executive Officer, Ale-8-One; Sara Massey, Executive Director, Kentucky Beverage Association; Jimmy Stewart, Chairman, Kentucky Grocers and Convenience Association; and Shannon Stiglitz, Kentucky Retail Federation, Inc..

LRC Staff: DeeAnn Wenk, Logan Bush, Cameron Franey, and Becky Lancaster.

Health in Kentucky: Overview

Allison Adams, President, Chief Executive Officer, Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky, discussed Kentucky's health rankings, chronic conditions trends, health provider shortages, immunizations, and senior adult health rankings.

In response to Senator Funke Frommeyer, Ms. Adams stated the report considered people of all ages with three or more diagnoses as having multiple chronic conditions.

In response to Representative Lockett, Ms. Adams stated the report is a Kentucky Department for Public Health report.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 4, 2025, meeting was made by Senator Douglas, seconded by Representative Callaway, and approved by voice vote.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

A. Kentucky Overview

Lesa Dennis, Commissioner, Department for Community Based Services (DCBS), Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), discussed the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and SNAP benefits aiding in the reduction of child protective service cases.

Roger McCann, Director, Division of Family Support, DCBS, CHFS, discussed SNAP education, outreach, employment training, SNAP statistics, opportunities for SNAP to further improve nutrition, and fighting fraud within SNAP.

In response to Representative Lockett, Mr. McCann stated he cannot track the "Double Dollars" program because it is operated by the Community Farm Alliance.

In response to Senator Douglas, Mr. McCann stated SNAP transactions are recorded and could show how the SNAP dollars are being spent at various locations.

In response to Senator Wheeler, Mr. McCann stated SNAP education is funded annually with approximately \$11 million from the federal government.

In response to Representative Duvall, Commissioner Dennis stated the administrative costs of SNAP are funded 50 percent by the state and 50 percent by the federal government and this will change to 75 percent funded by the state or approximately \$66 million in state dollars.

In response to Representative Tichenor, Mr. McCann stated he does not know the ratio of costs for administration compared to services provided.

B. Nutrition and Health

Kelly McKenna, Chief Executive Officer, End Chronic Disease, discussed chronic illness causes, the ability to reform and prevent chronic disease, and SNAP beneficiary statistics.

Dr. Ty Beal, Global Nutrition Scientist, Head of Food Systems Data and Analytics, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, Coalition Member, End Chronic Disease, discussed ultra-processed food health risks, unprocessed food benefits, and potential policy changes to regulate food processing practices.

In response to Representative Callaway, Dr. Beal stated he is not aware of scientists trying to reformulate foods to be GLP-1 receptor agonist drug resistant.

In response to Senator Douglas, Dr. Beal stated the diets compared in the discussed study were 80 percent ultra-processed foods versus 80 percent unprocessed foods.

In response to Senator Funke Frommeyer, Dr. Beal stated that keeping the messaging simple will help the general public understand it is better to eat unprocessed foods.

In response to Representative Lockett, Dr. Beal stated incentivizing grocers to build more stores and provide more unprocessed foods would help to eliminate food deserts.

C. Food Deserts

Jordan Olijie, Advocacy Coordinator, Feeding Kentucky, discussed the mission of Feeding Kentucky, four types of food insecurity, food insecurity cycle, factors in a food desert, SNAP benefits, options for accessing healthier food, and an upcoming hunger study.

In response to Senator Wheeler, Mr. Olijie stated SNAP item restrictions are often administered by the owner of a business to prohibit the purchase of certain items but this is difficult because of the increasing number of barcodes.

In response to Representative Callaway, Mr. Olijie stated he is aware of the Food Rx program, where boxes of food are sent to homes and tailored to specific chronic illnesses. Food banks often include recipe cards for the foods contained in the distributed boxes.

D. Impact on Business

Dallas Clark, Chief Executive Officer, Chairman, C.C. Clark, Inc., discussed the positive impact of the beverage industry in Kentucky, decreases in sugar and calories in soda, and consumer beverage spending with SNAP dollars.

In response to Representative Lockett, Sara Massey, Executive Director, Kentucky Beverage Association, stated that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) reports that SNAP users are spending five cents per dollar on beverages.

In response to Senator Douglas, Ms. Massey stated the USDA does not break down specific beverages purchased by SNAP participants.

In response to Senator Funke Frommeyer, Ms. Massey stated data shows sugar consumption is on the decline and obesity is on the rise, so the root cause of obesity is not soda beverages. The safety and efficacy of aspartame has been studied by food agencies around the world.

Shannon Stiglitz, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs, Kentucky Retail Federation, Inc., discussed the challenges with a purchase restriction on SNAP dollars, supermarket impact on the economy, the correlation with employment, receipt of SNAP dollars and lower medical costs, and SNAP beneficiary demographics to transaction information.

In response to Senator Wheeler, Ms. Stiglitz stated any technology and systems needed to regulate SNAP purchases must be paid by the state.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 PM.