

Columbus Office:
(614) 466-3100
Rep15@ohiohouse.gov
77 South High St,
Columbus, OH 43215

District 15:
Parts of Cuyahoga County



Committees:
Financial Institutions
(Ranking Member)
Aviation and Aerospace
Commerce and Labor
Economic and Workforce
Development
Ways and Means
9-1-1 Steering Committee

State Representative Richard Dell'Aquila

Dear Community Leaders,

I hope this message finds you well. I wish to bring to your attention crucial information concerning the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) program and its implications for the upcoming Summer EBT Program.

As you may already know, the P-EBT program, overseen by the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family services (ODJFS) under USDA authority, was established to assist families with children eligible for free or reduced-price school meals during the pandemic.

Recent trends, as highlighted in a Cleveland.com article [found here](#), indicate an underutilization estimated at around \$16 million or 14% of funds, which remain unclaimed by intended recipients. It is important to note that not all free or reduced-price meal students qualify for SNAP benefits, potentially leading to oversight in the availability of funds and not utilizing the P-EBT cards that were issued in the *child's* name.

Further complicating matters, families were given a limited window for card utilization, with only 274 days from issuance to expenditure. This period varied depending on issuance date with some cards expiring as soon as March 1, 2024, through the end of the month. The March 1st deadline is of particular significance, by which families *must* spend at least \$1 to extend usage by an additional 274 days.

With such a short turnaround, it is imperative that families are contacted regarding this program. Therefore, **we encourage you to notify all eligible families of this deadline.** The urgency of this matter is underscored by the imminent launch of the Summer 2024 EBT Program, mirroring the P-EBT model.

Families who do not have access to issued cards must request a new card through the P-EBT customer service line at 1-866-244-0071, Press Option 1. It is important to note that guidance has not yet been released regarding the course of action to be taken in cases where a new P-EBT card has been requested but the allocated 274-day period since issuance has already lapsed.

Thank you for your action on this matter. Together we can work towards a solution that ensures the well-being of opportunity to thrive for all Ohio students. Please reach out should you have any questions for our office.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard Dell'Aquila". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" being the most prominent part.

Representative Richard Dell'Aquila

Ohio House District 15