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Hello, my name is Olivia Lachelier. Thank you for allowing me to testify to you this morning. I wanted to talk today about struggling to make ends meet, although I am working full time and sometimes more. Even though I work as many as fifty hours a week, I am barely able to pay my bills and don't have anything left over to put into savings, or even to get enough to eat. I am grateful for the social programs that are available to me such as health care and what limited food assistance that I qualify for but I am here to say that it is not enough.

I am very conservative with food and I know how to make meals stretch but I still don't feel like I am getting enough food to have a healthy pregnancy. My job involves a lot of hard work and lifting, which is hard on our health. I often work up to fifty hours a week. People on food stamps are not lazy. Many of us work extremely hard, long hours but are still not able to make ends meet. I don't feel like people who work so hard should have to struggle so much. I can't afford the vegetable and protein I need in order to have a healthy baby.

I am happy to work and pay taxes into the system. However, I question why anyone who is working full time and going to school in order to make a better life has to struggle so hard and yet not be able to access enough benefits to be food secure.