

Witnesses to Hunger

Marinette

Marinette is a 36-year-old mother of five children. The father of her two youngest children was in the United States on a temporary visa, and after living with Marinette for several years he returned to his home country and virtually disappeared from her life. He does not speak with his family nor does he provide for the children financially, and Marinette is unable to demand child support because he does not have a social security number. Since Marinette has been left to provide for her five children on her own, she has struggled financially and emotionally. She has been late paying the rent on her 3-bedroom house and was taken to court by her landlord for back rent payments this summer. Marinette is currently working, but due to rent payments and court fees she has had to borrow large sums of money from friends and was unable to buy her three older children school uniforms and backpacks for the new school year.

Marinette works evenings and is unable to get at-home childcare from CCIS so she takes her children to daycare on the bus before getting onto another bus to her workplace. She likes working, but the additional stress from transportation and childcare limitations prevents her from working full-time. She doesn't know how long she'll be able to keep the job because transporting her children is more difficult in the winter and her fifteen-year-old daughter is now in school and unable to help look after the younger ones. Transportation and childcare issues also prevent her from getting counseling for depression and stress.

"I've been trying my best to pay my rent. It's been there late, but it's been there, every month since he left and it's been a year. And it's been a struggle, it's



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been hard, but I have to. I said I can't let myself go down. I can't be in a shelter with five kids. My kids are going to get depressed... who knows what can happen?"

"And I always say I would never give up on my kids. Like I always would try to do the best for them to at least graduate from high school because I'm not going to be able to afford for them to go to college or nothing like that, but at least if they could finish high school. I will never give up on them. I will always push them and try my best."

Policy Issues:

- Child Support
- CCIS
- Housing and rent assistance
- Mental health services

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