

## CONTROVERSIES

# Dem who opposed welfare fraud measure indicted – for food stamp fraud

By Brooke Singman , · **Fox News**

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## Mississippi sets new requirements for food stamp users

Jude Alex Ferrer weighs in

An Arizona Democratic lawmaker who once voted against welfare fraud protections in her state has been indicted on felony charges of defrauding the food stamp program.

According to the indictment unsealed earlier this week, state Rep. Cecilia Velasquez was charged with three felony counts: unlawful use of food stamps, fraudulent schemes and practices, and theft.

The Arizona Department of Economic Security began investigating Velasquez in 2014. According to the Arizona DES, Velasquez fraudulently used \$1,726 worth of food stamps between 2013 and 2015.

This past February, Velasquez had voted against a bill aimed at giving the same state agency stronger anti-fraud tools – a program that could have quickly detected her alleged fraudulent activity.

Arizona state Rep. Anthony Kern, who sponsored the House bill, called the indictment “sad.”

“It is appalling that an elected official representing the people of Arizona would steal from the poor, while consistently saying she is trying to help the poor,” Kern told Fox News.

Josh Archambault, senior fellow with the Foundation for Government Accountability, pointed to the failed legislation as the kind of measures the country needs to tackle fraud.

