

House Concurrent Resolution No. 15

93RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

4029L.011

1 **Whereas**, the Food Stamp Program serves as the first line of defense against
2 hunger in this country by enabling low-income families to buy nutritious food with coupons and
3 electronic benefits transfer cards; and
4

5 **Whereas**, the Food Stamp Program is the cornerstone of the federal food assistance
6 programs and provides crucial support to needy households by allowing recipients to spend their
7 benefits to buy eligible food in authorized retail food stores; and
8

9 **Whereas**, most food stamp rules apply to all households, but there are a few special
10 rules for households that have an elderly or disabled member. Under the Program, a person is
11 considered elderly if he or she is 60 years of age or older; and
12

13 **Whereas**, for 2006, a household with an elderly member may have up to \$3000 in
14 resources as compared to a household without an elderly member which may have up to \$2000
15 in resources. In addition to the resource limits, there is a monthly gross income test and a
16 monthly net income test to maintain eligibility; and
17

18 **Whereas**, in addition to the allowable deductions for all households, the elderly
19 receive a deduction for allowable medical costs paid by the elderly member that are more than
20 \$35 a month. The allowable medical costs include most medical and dental expenses, such as
21 doctor bills, prescription drugs and other over-the-counter medication when approved by a
22 doctor, dentures, hospital expenses, nursing care, some transportation costs, attendant care, and
23 health insurance premiums; and
24

25 **Whereas**, while the allowed deductions and exclusions are certainly helpful in
26 allowing the elderly to receive the needed food assistance, one of the largest expenditures made
27 by the elderly is not included in those deductions or exclusions. Many of the elderly have and

28 will continue to experience large heating bills this winter, with some estimates suggesting that
29 heating expenditures may more than double this year; and

30

31 **Whereas**, many low-income elderly people will be forced to choose between
32 paying the heating bill and buying food; and

33

34 **Whereas**, due to the unique needs of low-income elderly created by the
35 skyrocketing price of heating fuels, a waiver or amendment to the administrative oversight for
36 the federal Food Stamp Program is needed to ensure that the necessary food assistance is
37 available to our most vulnerable citizens:

38

39 **Now, therefore, be it resolved** that the members of the House of
40 Representatives of the Ninety-third General Assembly, Second Regular Session, the Senate
41 concurring therein, hereby urge the United States Congress and the United States Department
42 of Agriculture to waive or amend the administrative oversight for the federal Food Stamp
43 Program to increase the availability of food assistance for our low-income elderly citizens; and

44

45 **Be it further resolved** that the Chief Clerk of the Missouri House of
46 Representatives be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for Mike
47 Johanns, the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture and each member of the
48 Missouri Congressional Delegation.