

HB 1905 -- SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD STAMP ASSISTANCE

SPONSOR: Jetton

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Senior Citizen Advocacy by a vote of 11 to 0.

This bill authorizes the Family Support Division within the Department of Social Services to assist elderly individuals who qualify for the federal Food Stamp Program in obtaining supplemental food stamps. Subject to appropriation, households comprised of one or two elderly individuals who are at least 65 years of age will be entitled to receive supplemental assistance.

Qualified households consisting of one eligible elderly individual will receive supplemental assistance; however, the benefit combined with aid the individual receives under the federal program cannot exceed \$30 per month. Qualified households of two eligible elderly individuals cannot receive combined assistance exceeding \$60 per month.

The provisions of the bill will expire August 28, 2008.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Cost on General Revenue Fund of \$2,969,942 in FY 2007, \$3,071,668 in FY 2008, and \$513,038 in FY 2009. Subject to appropriation. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2007, FY 2008, and FY 2009.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that many seniors are currently receiving only minimum benefits under the federal Food Stamp Program. Seniors represent the fastest growing segment of Missouri's population and sometimes have to choose between paying for health care or paying for food. The bill will assist the most vulnerable members of Missouri by providing basic nutritional needs.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Jetton; Erma Cunningham; Silver Haired Legislature; AARP; Missouri Alliance of Area Agencies on Aging; Missouri Grocers Association; Missouri Retailers Association; Missouri Association for Community Action, Incorporated; and Marilyn DeFeo.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Alex Curchin, Legislative Analyst