

HCS HB 474 -- SNAP AND TANF

SPONSOR: Eggleston

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Children and Families by a vote of 6 to 5.

This bill changes the law regarding the use of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits via electronic benefit transfer (EBT) transaction. The bill adds pornography to the list of items that are prohibited from being purchased with TANF or SNAP benefits using an EBT card.

The bill requires that upon any third violation of the prohibition against using TANF or SNAP benefits via an EBT card in a prohibited establishment or to purchase prohibited items, a recipient will lose his or her benefits permanently.

The bill prohibits a recipient of TANF or SNAP from using his or her EBT card at any automated teller machine (ATM) to receive cash back on a purchase or to otherwise access the benefits as cash.

The bill repeals the provisions regarding pilot projects in certain counties to provide EBT cards to public assistance recipients.

This bill is the same as HB 475 (2019) and similar to HB 1443 (2018) and HB 164 (2017).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this bill will prevent persons on assistance from abusing the system and purchasing items that do not help the participants reach self-sufficiency.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Eggleston; and the Opportunity Solutions Project.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that people who are receiving temporary assistance often need access to cash, to pay everything from rent to rides and not allowing them access will do the exact opposite and prevent them from gaining self-sufficiency.

Testifying against the bill were Missouri Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Assault; and Empower Missouri.