

HCS SS SB 798 -- TANF AND SNAP

SPONSOR: Mosley

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Special Committee on Urban Issues by a vote of 6 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 9 to 3 with 1 voting Present.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for SB 798.

This bill establishes the "Restaurant Meals Program" within the Department of Social Services as part of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This Program specifies that, households containing certain elderly, disabled, or homeless individuals shall have the option, in accordance with federal law, to redeem their SNAP benefits at private establishments that contract with the Department to offer meals, including hot food and meals intended for immediate consumption, for eligible persons at concessional prices.

This bill also 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 requires that upon a first violation of the prohibition against using TANF benefits via an EBT card in a prohibited establishment or to purchase prohibited items, a TANF recipient will be disqualified from receiving benefits for three months; upon a second violation, the recipient will be disqualified for six months; and upon any third or subsequent violation, the recipient will be disqualified for five years. An individual may resume participation in the program at the end of the disqualification period by applying again.

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. If the Department of Social Services determines that a waiver is necessary for implementation of the prohibition, the Department will apply for a waiver from the Federal Department of Health and Human Services.

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

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the perfected Senate bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill will establish a program that will help homeless, disabled, and seniors individuals receive nutritional meals. The bill supports equity and independence for seniors and those with disabilities.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Mosley; Christine Woody, Empower Missouri; Susan Gibson; Empower Missouri; Health Forward Foundation; Missouri Catholic Conference; and E. Briana Conley, Paraquad, Inc..

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.