
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that because of Hawaii's
2 high cost of living and food prices, many low-income individuals
3 and families struggle to purchase food. The supplemental
4 nutrition assistance program, formerly known as the food stamp
5 program, is a crucial means of providing necessary assistance in
6 the purchasing of food for some of Hawaii's most disadvantaged
7 citizens. In fiscal year 2019, 157,000 Hawaii residents
8 participated in the supplemental nutrition assistance program,
9 roughly one in nine of the State's population. While Hawaii
10 secures over \$448,000,000 annually in supplemental nutrition
11 assistance program moneys, a 2017 report by the United States
12 Department of Agriculture ranked Hawaii twenty-seventh among
13 states in the percentage of eligible individuals who participate
14 in the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

15 The legislature further finds that if additional eligible
16 individuals participated in the supplemental nutrition
17 assistance program, the State could receive increased federal



1 funding. Additionally, Moody's Analytics estimates that every
2 \$1 given in supplemental nutrition assistance program funds can
3 generate \$1.70 in the local economy.

4 The legislature also finds that many individuals who are
5 eligible to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance
6 program do not participate because they are unaware of the
7 supplemental nutrition assistance program's existence or of
8 their eligibility. Authorizing health care providers, nonprofit
9 organizations, businesses, and faith-based organizations to
10 distribute supplemental nutrition assistance program
11 applications to those in need may increase participation in the
12 supplemental nutrition assistance program. Furthermore,
13 authorizing health care providers to report to the department of
14 human services an aggregate collection of data about state
15 supplemental nutrition assistance program participation would
16 allow the department of human services to aid policy makers in
17 establishing plans to maximize federal funding and increase
18 access to nutritious foods. Each of these outcomes would result
19 in the State having more supplemental nutrition assistance
20 program participants, which in turn would result in heightened



1 food security for low-income individuals and families, and more
2 money flowing into the State's economy.

3 The purpose of this Act is to authorize health care
4 providers, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and faith-based
5 organizations to distribute supplemental nutrition assistance
6 program applications.

7 SECTION 2. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
8 amended by adding a new section to part II to be appropriately
9 designated and to read as follows:

10 "§346- Supplemental nutrition assistance program
11 participation. Health care providers, nonprofit organizations,
12 businesses, and faith-based organizations may distribute
13 supplemental nutrition assistance program applications to anyone
14 interested in applying for program benefits."

15 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

16 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on June 30, 3000.

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H.B. NO. 782 H.D. 1

Report Title:

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; Department of Human Services; Applications

Description:

Authorizes health care providers, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and faith-based organizations to distribute supplemental nutrition assistance program applications to anyone interested in applying for program benefits. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD1)

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