



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 1482

January Session, 2025



***AN ACT CONCERNING MAXIMIZING USE OF FEDERAL
SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FUNDS AND
THE RESTAURANT MEALS PROGRAM FOR THE NUTRITIONAL
NEEDS OF ELDERLY PERSONS AND OTHERS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) As used in this section and
2 sections 2 to 4, inclusive, of this act: (1) "Restaurant Meals Program"
3 means a United States Department of Agriculture program that allows
4 an eligible supplemental nutrition assistance program beneficiary to
5 purchase meals at participating restaurants with their benefits, and (2)
6 "eligible beneficiary" means a supplemental nutrition assistance
7 program beneficiary who is sixty years of age or older, disabled,
8 homeless or the spouse of an eligible supplemental nutrition assistance
9 program beneficiary.

10 (b) The Commissioner of Social Services, in consultation with the
11 advisory committee established pursuant to section 2 of this act, shall
12 develop a plan to participate in the Restaurant Meals Program that
13 offers a variety of restaurant choices and healthy meal options for an
14 eligible beneficiary throughout the state. Not later than November 1,
15 2025, the commissioner shall file a report, in accordance with the
16 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, on the plan with the
17 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of

18 matters relating to human services. The commissioner shall submit a
19 formal application for state participation in the Restaurant Meals
20 Program with the United States Department of Agriculture not later
21 than December 1, 2025.

22 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established an
23 advisory committee to assist the Commissioner of Social Services in
24 developing a Restaurant Meals Program pursuant to section 1 of this act.

25 (b) The committee shall consist of the following members:

26 (1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
27 one of whom is a representative of community action agencies;

28 (2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of
29 whom is a representative of a nonprofit organization working on food
30 security issues;

31 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of
32 Representatives, who is a representative of a nonprofit organization
33 working on issues concerning homeless persons;

34 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who is a
35 representative of a nonprofit organization working on issues related to
36 health outcomes among minority populations;

37 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of
38 Representatives, who is a representative of a restaurant that has
39 participated in or is interested in participating in the Restaurant Meals
40 Program;

41 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, who is a
42 representative of a nonprofit organization working on issues relating to
43 aging persons;

44 (7) The House and Senate chairpersons of the joint standing
45 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
46 relating to human services, or their designees;

47 (8) The Commissioner of Social Services, or the commissioner's
48 designee;

49 (9) The Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services, or the
50 commissioner's designee; and

51 (10) A representative of the Commission on Women, Children,
52 Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, who works on issues concerning
53 nutrition, chosen by the executive director of the commission.

54 (c) Any member of the advisory committee appointed under
55 subdivision (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6) or (7) of subsection (b) of this section
56 may be a member of the General Assembly.

57 (d) All initial appointments to the advisory committee shall be made
58 not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any
59 vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

60 (e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro
61 tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the advisory
62 committee from among the members of the advisory committee. Such
63 chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the advisory committee,
64 which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of
65 this section.

66 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the
67 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to human
68 services shall serve as administrative staff of the advisory committee.

69 (g) The advisory committee shall study best practices nation-wide for
70 state implementation of the Restaurant Meals Program and submit
71 interim recommendations concerning the development of a Restaurant
72 Meals Program to the Commissioner of Social Services not later than
73 October 1, 2025. Not later than January 1, 2026, and annually thereafter
74 until a Restaurant Meals Program is established in the state, the advisory
75 committee shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations
76 to the Commissioner of Social Services and the joint standing

77 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
78 relating to aging and human services, in accordance with the provisions
79 of section 11-4a of the general statutes. The report shall include
80 recommendations on any legislation necessary to establish a Restaurant
81 Meals Program in the state.

82 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Commissioner of Social
83 Services, in consultation with the Commissioner of Aging and Disability
84 Services and area agencies on aging, as described in section 17a-850 of
85 the general statutes, and the task force established pursuant to section 4
86 of this act, shall maximize the use of federal supplemental nutrition
87 assistance program funds to provide nutritious meals to elderly persons
88 living at home or in congregate housing, including, but not limited to,
89 through establishment of the Restaurant Meals Program pursuant to
90 section 1 of this act.

91 (b) Not later than December 31, 2025, and twice annually thereafter,
92 the Commissioner of Social Services shall file a report, in accordance
93 with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, with the joint
94 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of
95 matters relating to aging and human services on (1) funding under the
96 supplemental nutrition assistance program used for such meals, (2) any
97 impediments under federal law to using such funding for such meals,
98 and (3) any state appropriations necessary to ensure the program serves
99 all persons who are eligible for supplemental nutritional assistance.

100 Sec. 4. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force to
101 study and make recommendations concerning maximizing use of
102 supplemental nutrition assistance program funds to expand nutritional
103 services for elderly persons, including, but not limited to, establishing a
104 Restaurant Meals Program pursuant to section 1 of this act. Such study
105 shall include, but need not be limited to, a review of the (1) elderly
106 nutrition program administered by the Department of Aging and
107 Disability Services, (2) ways to utilize supplemental nutrition assistance
108 program funds to expand the elderly nutrition program, (3) costs of the
109 meal preparation and delivery under the elderly nutrition program, (4)

110 number of participants in the elderly nutrition program compared to the
111 estimated number of persons in need of nutritional services, (5)
112 adequacy of state funding levels for the elderly nutrition program, and
113 (6) process for contracting with providers of elderly nutrition services.

114 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

115 (1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
116 one of whom shall be a representative of the eastern area agency on
117 aging and one of whom shall be a representative of the north central
118 area agency on aging;

119 (2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of
120 whom shall be a representative of the south central area agency on aging
121 and one of whom shall be a representative of the southwestern area
122 agency on aging;

123 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of
124 Representatives, who shall be a representative of the western area
125 agency on aging;

126 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who shall be
127 a representative of an elderly nutrition provider who represents a
128 community action agency;

129 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of
130 Representatives, who shall be a representative of an elderly nutrition
131 provider;

132 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, who shall be
133 a senior citizen who receives meals through the elderly nutrition
134 program;

135 (7) The House and Senate chairpersons of the joint standing
136 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
137 relating to human services, or their designees;

138 (8) The Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services, or the

139 commissioner's designee; and

140 (9) The Commissioner of Social Services, or the commissioner's
141 designee.

142 (c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1),
143 (2), (3), (4), (5), (6) or (7) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member
144 of the General Assembly.

145 (d) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later
146 than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall
147 be filled by the appointing authority.

148 (e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro
149 tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from
150 among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule
151 the first meeting of the task force not later than September 1, 2025.

152 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the
153 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to human
154 services shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

155 (g) Not later than January 15, 2026, the task force shall submit a report
156 on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committees
157 of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to aging
158 and human services, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a
159 of the general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it
160 submits such report or January 15, 2026, whichever is later.

161 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) As used in this section "food
162 desert" means an area of the state identified as a food desert in the Food
163 Access Research Atlas produced by the United States Department of
164 Agriculture's Economic Research Service.

165 (b) Not later than October 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, the
166 Attorney General shall file a report, in accordance with the provisions
167 of section 11-4a of the general statutes, with the joint standing
168 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters

169 relating to commerce, human services and the judiciary on (1) any price
170 discrimination investigation launched by the Attorney General against
171 a grocery store under state law in any area of the state, including, but
172 not limited to, a food desert, and (2) information on any investigations
173 under federal law into said price discrimination that the Attorney
174 General is aware of and recommendations on legislation that may be
175 needed to protect consumers against said discrimination.

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| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: | | |
| Section 1 | <i>from passage</i> | New section |
| Sec. 2 | <i>from passage</i> | New section |
| Sec. 3 | <i>from passage</i> | New section |
| Sec. 4 | <i>from passage</i> | New section |
| Sec. 5 | <i>from passage</i> | New section |

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

The title was changed, and in Section 5(a), "area identified" was changed to "area of the state identified" for clarity and consistency.

HS *Joint Favorable Subst.*