

Chapter 718

(House Bill 356)

AN ACT concerning

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Benefits – ~~Exclusion of~~
~~Sugar-Sweetened Beverages and Other Nonnutritious Foods~~ Grant Application**

FOR the purpose of requiring the Department of Human Resources to ~~request permission from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to exclude sugar-sweetened beverages and, at the Department's discretion, certain other foods from the food items that may be purchased with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits~~ submit a grant application to the United States Department of Agriculture to support a pilot project that provides certain incentives and in response to a certain opportunity for funding; requiring the Department of Human Resources to report to the Governor and the General Assembly, ~~beginning on a certain date and at certain intervals~~ on or before certain dates, on the status of the ~~request grant application submission;~~ providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the use of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits.

Preamble

~~WHEREAS, Reducing consumption of calories from added sugars is a recommendation of the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and an objective of the Healthy People 2020 initiative; and~~

~~WHEREAS, Sugar-sweetened beverages are major sources of added sugars in the diets of U.S. residents; and~~

~~WHEREAS, Daily consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages is associated with obesity and other chronic health conditions, including Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease; and~~

~~WHEREAS, Low-income persons consume more sugar-sweetened beverages in relation to their overall diet than those with higher incomes; and~~

~~WHEREAS, More than one-half (52%) of sugar-drink kilocalories are consumed in the home and, of these sugar-drink kilocalories, the vast majority (92%) are purchased in stores; and~~

~~WHEREAS, The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the largest nutrition assistance program in the country; and~~

~~WHEREAS, The goals of SNAP are to improve participants' food security and their access to a healthy diet; and~~

~~WHEREAS, In fiscal year 2015, approximately 800,000 Maryland residents participated in SNAP each month, at a cost to taxpayers of about \$1.15 billion; now, therefore,~~

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

~~(a) On or before January 1, 2017, the Department of Human Resources shall request permission from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to exclude sugar sweetened beverages and, at the discretion of the Department, other nonnutritious foods from the food items that are eligible to be purchased with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits.~~

(a) The Department of Human Resources shall submit a grant application to the United States Department of Agriculture under the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive program:

(1) to support a pilot project that provides incentives to directly and efficiently increase the purchase and consumption of eligible fruits and vegetables by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program participants; and

(2) in response to the next opportunity for available funding after July 1, 2016.

~~(b) Beginning January 1, 2017, and every 6 months thereafter~~ On or before January 1, 2017, and on or before January 1, 2018, the Department of Human Resources shall submit a report to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly on the status of the request grant application submission.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect ~~October~~ July 1, 2016. It shall remain effective for a period of ~~4~~ 2 years and, at the end of ~~September 30, 2020~~ June 30, 2018, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Enacted under Article II, § 17(c) of the Maryland Constitution, May 28, 2016.