

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR  
CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO  
**SENATE, No. 2034**

with committee amendments

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: JUNE 23, 2022

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 2034.

As amended, this bill amends an existing law, section 1 of P.L.2021, c.243 (C.44:10-81.3), which requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to establish a streamlined New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) application process for seniors, to instead require the application process be streamlined for all residents of New Jersey. The goal of streamlining the application process is to maximize the enrollment of eligible SNAP participants in New Jersey.

In streamlining the SNAP application process, the Commissioner of Human Services will be required to, at a minimum, update the online application system to ensure the system employs current technology and is user-friendly, with features that include, but are not limited to, easy account creation, easy access, and easy tracking of an applicant's application status.

As amended, the bill additionally requires the DHS to establish a call center where DHS employees or persons under contract with the DHS will be available, in real-time, to assist individuals in navigating the SNAP application process, checking on the status of an application, and troubleshooting any issues with the application.

The bill directs the commissioner to apply to the Food and Nutrition Service within the United States Department of Agriculture for any necessary waivers or approvals to implement the provisions of the bill.

As amended, the bill revises the rulemaking section of P.L.2021, c.243 to provide that the rules and regulations adopted by the DHS will apply both to P.L.2021, c.243 and to the provisions of this bill.

As amended, the bill appropriates \$750,000 from the General Fund to the DHS for the purposes of implementing the bill.

As reported by the committee with amendments, Senate Bill No. 2034 is identical to Assembly Bill No. 2359 (1R), which was also reported by the committee on this date with amendments.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments revise the bill to amend P.L.2021, c.243, which overlaps with certain provisions of the bill as introduced, to merge the provisions of that enactment with the provisions of this bill. Specifically, the amendments:

(1) remove from P.L.2021, c.243 references to a streamlined application process for senior citizens and instead make the streamlined application process applicable to all New Jersey residents;

(2) remove the requirements for the streamlined application process set forth in P.L.2021, c.243 to include a simplified application form, increased data sharing, and cross-enrollment in Medicaid; and replace those requirements with the requirements for the streamlined application process provided in the bill as introduced, which include easy account creation, easy access, and easy tracking of the applicant's status;

(3) provide that, instead of expanding senior citizen participation rates in SNAP, the purpose of the streamlined application process is to maximize enrollment of eligible SNAP participants in New Jersey.

The committee amendments revise the provisions of the bill concerning the call center to replace language requiring the DHS to maintain the call center with language requiring the DHS to establish the call center.

The committee amendments revise the rulemaking provisions of P.L.2021, c.243 to provide that the rulemaking section applies both to that enactment and to this bill.

The committee amendments add a section appropriating \$750,000 to the DHS to implement the provisions of the bill.

The committee amendments revise the title and synopsis of the bill to reflect the changes made by these amendments.