
Appropriations Committee

HB 1784

Brief Description: Concerning hunger relief.

Sponsors: Representatives Gregerson, Ormsby, Duerr, Alvarado, Berry, Ryu, Bergquist, Peterson, Berg, Chapman, Mena, Lekanoff, Senn, Thai, Leavitt, Santos, Callan, Macri, Fosse, Riccelli, Doglio, Kloba, Timmons, Ramel, Bateman and Pollet.

Brief Summary of Bill
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Appropriates a total of \$28.0 million to the State General Fund in Fiscal Year 2023 to support food assistance programs operated by the departments of Agriculture, Social and Health Services, and Health.

Hearing Date: 2/13/23

Staff: Mary Mulholland (786-7391).

Background:

Basic Food and the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), called Basic Food in Washington, provides monthly federally funded benefits for eligible people with low incomes to use to purchase food. During the COVID-19 public health emergency declaration, the federal government temporarily increased its financial support of Basic Food. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, signed by President Biden on December 29, 2022, ends this temporary emergency support beginning in March 2023.

Other Food Assistance Programs.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

In addition to Basic Food, there are a number of food assistance programs offered to eligible people in Washington by a variety of state agencies.

The Department of Agriculture (WSDA) leads state and federally funded food assistance programs to help people with lower incomes and people experiencing homelessness access food by directly providing food, funding, logistics services, and outreach to hunger-relief organizations and tribes.

The Department of Health (DOH), among other food-related programs, offers the Fruit and Vegetables Incentives Program (FVIP) to help lower-income families afford to purchase fruits and vegetables using a combination of state, federal, and private funding.

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Aging and Long-Term Support Administration (AL TSA) contracts with county based Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) to provide home-delivered and congregate meals to seniors, as well as other senior nutrition services, primarily with federal funding through the Older Americans Act.

Summary of Bill:

The bill appropriates a total of \$28.0 million to the State General Fund in Fiscal Year 2023. This amount includes:

- \$20.0 million for WSDA to provide grants to hunger relief organizations for actions to support food security in the state, including the purchase of food and supplies; investments in storage capacity; management of facilities and operations; and any other activity necessary to support food security for the public;
- \$2.0 million for FVIP at DOH; and
- \$6.0 million for DSHS-AL TSA to provide to the AAAs for senior nutrition services. The AAAs must prioritize services for seniors most impacted by the loss of federal resources for Basic Food that were provided during the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding may also be used for outreach activities that target this population.

Appropriation: The sum of \$28,000,000.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.