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# County of Santa Cruz

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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AGENDA: 6/19/01

June 12, 2001

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
County of Santa Cruz  
701 Ocean Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: SUPPORT FOR S. 583 - THE NUTRITION ASSISTANCE FOR  
WORKING FAMILIES AND SENIORS ACT OF 2001

Dear Members of the Board:

Attached is a letter from Willy Elliott-McCrea, Executive Director of the Second Harvest Food Bank, requesting that the Board take a position in support of S. 583, introduced into the United States Senate by Senator Edward Kennedy. S. 583 would amend the Food Stamp Act of 1977 to improve nutrition assistance for working families and the elderly by enacting the Nutrition Assistance for Working Families and Seniors Act of 2001. Also attached is a copy of the legislation as currently proposed.

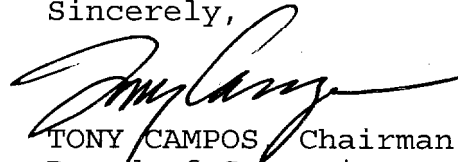
As Mr. Elliott-McCrea indicates, "According to the United States Department of Agriculture's analysis of the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey, low-income families (between 50% and 130% of the poverty line) were more food insecure in 1999 than in 1995." As we know from the experience in our own community, the cost of providing shelter and utilities often overtaxes a family's ability to put food on the table. However, if changes were made in the criteria for Food Stamp eligibility, those in need would be able to access these critically important benefits. I believe this legislation is worthy of Board support. Accordingly, I recommend that the Board of Supervisors take the following actions:

1. Adopt the attached resolution supporting S. 583.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
June 12, 2001  
Page 2

2. Direct the Clerk of the Board to distribute the resolution as indicated.
3. Direct the County Administrative Officer to place the Bill in our legislative tracking system.

Sincerely,



TONY CAMPOS Chairman  
Board of Supervisors

TC:ted  
Attachments

cc: Willy Elliott-McCrea, Second Harvest Food Bank  
Human Resources Agency Administrator

2629A6

BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

RESOLUTION NO.

On the motion of Supervisor  
duly seconded by Supervisor  
the following resolution is adopted

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PASSAGE OF S. 583

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 583 has been introduced in the Senate  
of the United States by Senator Edward Kennedy; and

WHEREAS, S. 583 would amend the Food Stamp Act of 1977 to  
improve nutrition assistance for working families and the elderly  
by enacting the Nutrition Assistance for Working Families and  
Seniors Act of 2001; and

WHEREAS, according to the United States Department of  
Agriculture's analysis of the Census Bureau's Current Population  
Survey, low-income families (between 50% and 130% of the poverty  
line) were more food insecure in 1999 than in 1995; and

WHEREAS, in Santa Cruz County, the cost of providing shelter  
and utilities often overtaxes a family's ability to put food on  
the table; and

WHEREAS, it is critical that changes be made in the criteria  
for Food Stamp eligibility to increase the opportunity for those  
in need to access the Food Stamp Program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Santa Cruz County  
Board of Supervisors hereby supports the passage of S. 583.

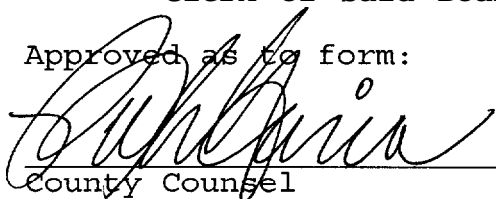
PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County  
of Santa Cruz, State of California, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2001, by the following vote:

AYES: SUPERVISORS  
NOES: SUPERVISORS  
ABSENT: SUPERVISORS

\_\_\_\_\_  
TONY CAMPOS, Chairman  
Board of Supervisors

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of said Board

Approved as to form:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
County Counsel

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PASSAGE OF S. 583  
Page 2

DISTRIBUTION:    Senator Edward Kennedy  
                  Senator Dianne Feinstein  
                  Senator Barbara Boxer  
                  Congress Member Sam Farr  
                  Congress Member Mike Honda  
                  Second Harvest Food Bank  
                  County Counsel

2629A6



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#### Executive Director

*Willy Elliott-McCrea*

June 5, 2001

Board of Supervisors  
County of Santa Cruz  
701 Ocean Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: Support for Senate Bill 583, the Nutrition Assistance for Working Families and Seniors Act of 2001

Dear Members of the Board,

The Second Harvest Food Bank is enlisting the support of the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors to help end hunger and alleviate malnutrition by supporting the Senate Bill 583, the Nutrition Assistance for Working Families and Seniors Act of 2001, introduced by Senator Edward Kennedy.

Too many working families and seniors have trouble putting enough food on the table. Nationwide, participation in the Food Stamp program has declined 34% since 1996, four times faster than the decline in the poverty rate. Despite this country's record period of economic growth, appallingly high levels of poverty, hunger and food insecurity persist, especially among children. A combination of low wages for an estimated 14 million workers and declining participation in programs like food stamps among eligible families is keeping much of the positive impact of economic growth from millions of people. Census Bureau data shows that poverty has been declining in the last few years of the economic expansion, albeit slowly. But, remarkably, according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) analysis of the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey, low-income families (between 50% and 130% of the poverty line) were more food insecure in 1999 than in 1995. As it appears we are now faced with a period of economic recession, it becomes more critical to address the needs of the most vulnerable - seniors, children and recent immigrants.

According to a July 1999 General Accounting Office study, "Children's participation in the Food Stamp Program has dropped more sharply than the number of children living in poverty, indicating a growing gap between need and assistance." The effects of hunger and malnutrition are particularly damaging to children. Hungry and malnourished children are more likely to become anemic and to suffer from allergies, asthma, diarrhea and infections. They are more likely to have behavioral problems and difficulty in learning.

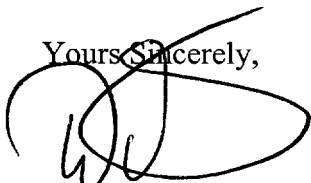
Food Stamp eligibility was based on need alone for over 30 years, but in 1996, the welfare reform law began disqualifying people based only on immigration status. California is one of only 13 states that provides Food Stamp coupons to those disqualified solely due to immigration status. The budget for the California Food Assistance Program (CFAP) in FY 01-02 is estimated at between 52-57 million dollars and will serve between 71 ,000-79,000 persons. Despite California's assistance to immigrant families, the atmosphere surrounding welfare reform and the issue of "public charge" has discouraged many qualified legal immigrants and their children from participating in the Food Stamp Program.

The Food Stamp Program does not adequately support the needs of the working poor and those transitioning from welfare to work. The application process is lengthy and complex, members of working households may not be able to take the time off work to apply for food stamps. Lack of information or misinformation prevent working families from participating. Working families may not believe they are eligible or may view the program as "welfare". In addition, the amount of benefits received is often minimal suggesting that it is unlikely that one would spend the time with a lengthy application process and monthly paperwork hassles for a small amount of food stamps.

A strong Food Stamp Program is essential to ensure that all people can get the food they need to stay healthy. Promoting self-sufficiency, encouraging transitions from welfare to work, and eradicating hunger among children and immigrants should be top priorities. Towards those goals, Second Harvest is requesting that the Board support Senate Bill **583**.

Thanks for your attention to this urgent appeal.

Yours Sincerely,



Willy Elliott-McCrea  
Executive Director

Attachments

**SENATE BILL 583**  
**NUTRITION ASSISTANCE FOR WORKING FAMILIES AND SENIORS ACT**  
*\$2.75 Billion Over Five Years*

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***Working families and elderly have difficulty accessing the food they need.*** Participation in the Food Stamp Program has declined 34% over the past four years, four times more than poverty, leaving over 2 million more people in poverty AND without food stamps today than in 1995. A July 1999 GAO study concludes, “children’s participation in the Food Stamp Program has dropped more sharply than the number of children living in poverty, indicating a growing gap between need and assistance.” USDA determined that 6.1 million adults and 3.2 million children lived in households that experienced hunger during 1998. An Urban Institute study finds that 33% of former welfare recipients have to skip or cut meals due to lack of food. The National Survey of America’s Families, covering 100,000 people, concludes that 24% of all children of immigrants live in poverty, and 37% of these children face difficulty affording food.

***Secure access to nutrition improves health, education, and labor outcomes.*** Undernourished children score lower on tests, have more disciplinary difficulties, and face increased health risks. Hunger diminishes adults’ health and concentration as well. Decades ago the Food Stamp Program was constructed as the nation’s primary hunger safety net. It has weakened over the years. This bill responds.

**§ 1-Restore food stamp eligibility to all legal immigrants.** Food stamp eligibility was based upon need alone for over 30 years, but in 1996, the welfare reform law began disqualifying people based only on immigration status. This part of welfare reform was partially repealed in 1997. Immigrants who remain ineligible include taxpayers working in low-income jobs, some elderly, parents sharing resources with children, and children who arrived **after** 1996. This bill restores eligibility to all legal immigrants.

**§ 2-End the child penalty in food stamp law.** ‘Just as the marriage penalty unfairly penalizes some couples, existing food stamp law penalizes families with children. By indexing the food stamp standard deduction to family size, this bill provides the **full** benefit to the poorest families (10% of poverty).

**§ 3—Increase the minimum food stamp benefit to \$25.** The \$10 minimum benefit has been frozen since 1977. As inflation has eroded its value, many people on fixed incomes have voiced concern.

**§ 4-Include child support in the existing food stamp earnings disregard.** This bill treats child support payments like income when calculating benefits, including the existing 20% earnings disregard. This is consistent with last year’s overwhelming House approval of a plan to encourage states to pass more child support payments through to low-income families and increase parental involvement.

**§ 5—Expand state options for transitional food stamp assistance.** Current law enables states to ease the transition **from** welfare to work by providing families who leave TANF with a six-month transitional Medicaid benefit. New food stamp rules allow a 3-month state option for a transitional food stamp benefit. This bill mirrors the Medicaid six-month Medicaid transitional benefit for food stamps, simplifying state recordkeeping, increasing state flexibility, and helping TANF families transition to work.

**§ (i--Improve access to food stamp information.** This bill authorizes \$50 million over five years to support rural and urban community partnerships that inform people about how the program operates, online and telephone access to the Food Stamp Program, caseworker training, and one-stop centers.

**§ 7—Increase access to emergency food.** Need for emergency food has increased 15-20% over the past year according to pantries and soup kitchens, 71% of which are run by faith based organizations. Over a third of families seeking emergency food included an employed adult, and 38% of emergency food clients are children. This bill **authorizes** \$1 00 million more for The Emergency Food Assistance Program.

To amend the Food Stamp Act of 1977 to improve nutrition assistance for working families and the elderly, and for other purposes.

**IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES**

**March 21, 2001**

Mr KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. CHAFEE, and Mrs. CLINTON) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

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**A BILL**

To amend the Food Stamp Act of 1977 to improve nutrition assistance for working families and the elderly, and for other purposes.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the ‘Nutrition Assistance for Working Families and Seniors Act of 2001’.

**SEC. 2. RESTORATION OF FOOD STAMP BENEFITS FOR LEGAL IMMIGRANTS.**

(a) LIMITED ELIGIBILITY OF QUALIFIED ALIENS FOR CERTAIN FEDERAL PROGRAMS-

(1) IN GENERAL- Section 402(a) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1612(a)) is amended--

(A) in paragraph (2)--

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking ‘Federal programs’ and inserting ‘Federal program’;

(ii) in subparagraph (D)--

(1) by striking clause (ii); and

(II) in clause (i)--

(aa) by striking ‘(i)

SSI- ’ and all that follows through ‘paragraph (3)(A)’ and inserting the following:



‘(i) IN GENERAL- With respect to the specified Federal program described in paragraph (3)’;

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(bb) by redesignating subclauses (II) through (IV) as clauses (ii) through (iv) and indenting appropriately;

(cc) by striking ‘subclause (I)’ each place it appears and inserting ‘clause (i)’; and

(dd) in clause (iv) (as redesignated by item (bb)), by striking ‘this clause’ and inserting ‘this subparagraph’;

(iii) in subparagraph (E), by striking ‘paragraph (3)(A) (relating to the supplemental security income program)’ and inserting ‘paragraph (3)’;

(iv) in subparagraph (F);

(I) by striking ‘Federal programs’ and inserting ‘Federal program’;

(II) in clause (ii)(I)--

(aa) by striking ‘(I) in the case of the specified Federal program described in paragraph (3)(A),’; and

(bb) by striking ‘; and’ and inserting a period; and

(III) by striking subclause (II);

(v) in subparagraph (G), by striking ‘Federal programs’ and inserting ‘Federal program’;

(vi) in subparagraph (H), by striking ‘paragraph (3)(A) (relating to the supplemental security income program)’ and inserting ‘paragraph (3)’; and

(vii) by striking subparagraphs (I), (J), and (K); and

(B) in paragraph (3)--

(i) by striking ‘means any’ and all that follows through ‘The supplemental’ and inserting ‘means the supplemental’; and

(ii) by striking subparagraph (B).

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT- Section 402(b)(2)(F) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1612(b)(2)(F)) is amended by striking ‘subsection (a) (3)(A)’ and inserting ‘subsection (a)(3)’.

(b) FIVE-YEAR LIMITED ELIGIBILITY OF QUALIFIED ALIENS FOR FEDERAL MEANS-TESTED PUBLIC BENEFIT- Section 403 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1613) is amended--

(1) in subsection (c)(2), by adding at the end the following:

‘(L) Assistance or benefits under the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.).’; and

(2) in subsection (d)--

(A) by striking ‘not apply’ and all that follows through ‘(1) an individual’ and inserting ‘not apply

to an individual'; and

(B) by striking `; or' and all that follows through '402(a)(3)(B)';

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(c) **AUTHORITY FOR STATES TO PROVIDE FOR ATTRIBUTION OF SPONSOR'S INCOME AND RESOURCES TO THE ALIEN WITH RESPECT TO STATE PROGRAMS-** Section 422(b) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1632(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

'(8) Programs comparable to assistance or benefits under the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.).'

(d) **REQUIREMENTS FOR SPONSOR'S AFFIDAVIT OF SUPPORT-** Section 423(d) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1183a note; Public Law 104-193) is amended by adding at the end the following:

'(12) Benefits under the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), if a sponsor is unable to make the reimbursement because the sponsor experiences hardship (including bankruptcy, disability, and indigence) or if the sponsor experiences severe

circumstances beyond the control of the sponsor, as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture.'

(e) **DERIVATIVE ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFITS-** Section 436 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1646) is repealed.

(f) **APPLICATION-** This section and the amendments made by this section shall apply to assistance or benefits provided under the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) for months beginning on or after April 1, 2002.

### **SEC. 3. PREVENTION OF HUNGER AMONG FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN.**

(a) **STANDARD DEDUCTION-** Section 5(e) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2014(e)) is amended by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

`(1) **STANDARD DEDUCTION-**

'(A) **IN GENERAL-** Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall allow a standard deduction for each household in the 48 contiguous States and the District of Columbia, Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, and the Virgin Islands of the United States equal to the applicable percentage established under subparagraph (C) of the income standard of eligibility under subsection (c)(1).

'(B) **LIMITATIONS-** The standard deduction for each household in the 48 contiguous States and the District of Columbia, Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, and the Virgin Islands of the United States under subparagraph (A) shall not be--

'(i) less than \$134, \$229, \$189, \$269, and \$118, respectively; or

'(ii) more than the applicable percentage specified in subparagraph (C) of the income standard of eligibility established under section (c)(1) for a household of 6 members.

'(C) **APPLICABLE PERCENTAGE-** The applicable percentage referred to in subparagraphs (A) and (B) shall be--

'(i) for fiscal year 2002, 8 percent;

- ‘(ii) for fiscal year 2003, 8.5 percent;
- ‘(iii) for fiscal year 2004, 9 percent;
- ‘(iv) for fiscal year 2005, 9.5 percent; and
- ‘(v) for each subsequent fiscal year, 10 percent.’.

(b) APPLICATION DATE- The amendments made by this section shall apply on the later of--

- (1) July 1, 2002; or
- (2) at the option of a State agency of a State (as those terms are defined in section 3 of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2012)), October 1, 2002.

#### **SEC. 4. ENCOURAGEMENT OF COLLECTION OF CHILD SUPPORT.**

(a) IN GENERAL- Section 5(e)(2) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2014(e)(2)) is amended--

- (1) by inserting ‘AND CHILD SUPPORT’ after ‘INCOME’;
- (2) in subparagraph (A) by--
  - (A) striking ‘DEFINITION OF’ and all that follows through ‘not include’ and inserting ‘LIMITATION ON DEDUCTION- The deduction in this paragraph shall not apply to’;
  - (B) striking ‘or’ at the end of clause (i);
  - (C) striking the period at the end of clause (ii) and inserting ‘; or’; and
  - (D) adding at the end the following:
    - ‘(iii) child support received to the extent of any reduction in public assistance to the household as a result of receiving such support.’; and

(3) in subparagraph (B), by striking ‘to compensate’ and all that follows through the period and inserting ‘and child support received from an identified or putative parent of a child in the household if that parent is not a household member.’.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE- The amendments made by this section take effect on October 1, 2002.

#### **SEC. 5. MINIMUM FOOD STAMP ALLOTMENT.**

Section 8(a) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2017(a)) is amended by striking ‘shall be \$10 per month.’ and inserting ‘shall be--

- ‘(1) for each of fiscal years 2002 and 2003, \$15 per month;
- ‘(2) for each of fiscal years 2004 and 2005, \$20 per month;
- ‘(3) for fiscal year 2006, \$25 per month;
- ‘(4) for fiscal year 2007 and each subsequent fiscal year, the minimum allotment under paragraph (3),

adjusted on each October 1 to reflect the percentage change in the cost of the thrifty food plan for the 12-month period ending in the preceding June, rounded to the nearest lower dollar increment.’.

## **SEC. 6. TRANSITIONAL BENEFITS OPTION.**

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(a) IN GENERAL- Section 11 of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2020) is amended by adding at the end the following:

‘(s) TRANSITIONAL BENEFITS OPTION-

‘(1) IN GENERAL- A State may provide transitional food stamp benefits to a household that is no longer eligible to receive cash assistance under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.).

‘(2) TRANSITIONAL BENEFITS PERIOD- Under paragraph (1), a household may continue to receive food stamp benefits for a period of not more than 6 months after the date on which cash assistance is terminated.

‘(3) AMOUNT- During the transitional benefits period under paragraph (2), a household shall receive an amount equal to the allotment received in the month immediately preceding the date on which cash assistance is terminated, adjusted for--

‘(A) the change in household income as a result of the termination of cash assistance; and

‘(B) any changes in circumstances that may result in an increase in the food stamp allotment of the household and that the household elects to report (as verified in accordance with standards established by the Secretary).

‘(4) DETERMINATION OF FUTURE ELIGIBILITY- In the final month of the transitional benefits period under paragraph (2), the State agency may--

‘(A) require a household to cooperate in a redetermination of eligibility to receive uninterrupted benefits after the transitional benefits period; and

‘(B) renew eligibility for a new certification period for the household without regard to whether the previous certification period has expired.

‘(5) LIMITATION- A household sanctioned under section 6 shall not be eligible for transitional benefits under this subsection.’.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS-

(1) Section 3 of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2012) is amended by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

‘(c) CERTIFICATION PERIOD-

‘(1) IN GENERAL- ‘Certification period’ means the period for which households shall be eligible to receive benefits under this Act.

‘(2) DURATION-

‘(A) IN GENERAL- A certification period shall not exceed 12 months, except that--

‘(i) a certification period may be up to 24 months if all adult household members are elderly or disabled; and

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‘(ii) a certification period may be extended during the transitional benefits period under section 11 (s).

‘(B) EXTENSION- The certification period may be extended to the end of a transitional benefits period established by a State under section 11 (s).

‘(3) CONTACT- A State agency shall have at least 1 contact with each certified household--

‘(A) at least once every 12 months; or

‘(B) in a case in which the household is in a transitional benefits period under section 11 (s), within the 6-month period beginning on the date on which cash assistance is terminated.’.

(2) Section 6(c) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2015(c)) is amended by striking ‘No household’ and inserting ‘Except in a case in which a household is receiving transitional benefits during the transitional benefits period under section 11 (s), no household’.

## **SEC. 7. FOOD STAMP INFORMATION.**

(a) TRAINING MATERIALS; NUTRITION INFORMATION- Section 11 of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2020) (as amended by section 6) is amended by adding at the end the following:

‘(t) RESOURCES FOR STATE AGENCY EMPLOYEES- The Secretary, in partnership with State agencies, shall develop training materials, guidebooks, and other resources for use by employees of State agencies that focus on issues of access and eligibility under the food stamp program.

‘(u) NUTRITION INFORMATION- The Secretary shall maintain a toll-free information number for individuals to call to obtain information concerning the nutrition programs.’.

(b) INTER-PROGRAM COORDINATION OF APPLICATION AND VERIFICATION PROCESS- Section 17 of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2026) is amended by striking subsection (e) and inserting the following:

‘(e) PILOT PROJECTS FOR INTER-PROGRAM COORDINATION OF APPLICATION AND VERIFICATION PROCESS-

‘(1) IN GENERAL- The Secretary shall provide the Federal shares of funds to States to carry out pilot projects under paragraph (2) to improve the application and verification process for low-income working households to participate in the food stamp program.

‘(2) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS-

‘(A) INTER-PROGRAM APPLICATION PROCESS-

‘(i) APPLICATION AT ONE-STOP DELIVERY CENTERS- The Secretary shall provide funding to not more than 5 States to conduct pilot projects to improve inter-program coordination by co-locating employees and automated systems necessary to accept complete initial processing of applications for assistance under this Act at centers in one-stop delivery systems established under section 134(c) of the Workforce Investment Act of

‘(ii) APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE UNDER MEDICAID&CHIP- The Secretary shall provide funding to not more than 5 States to conduct pilot projects to improve inter-program coordination by co-locating employees and automated systems necessary to accept complete initial processing of applications for assistance under this Act at locations where applications are received for assistance under titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq. and 1397aa et seq.).

‘(B) INTER-PROGRAM VERIFICATION PROCESS-

‘(i) IN GENERAL- The Secretary shall provide funding to not more than 5 States to conduct pilot projects to reduce administrative burdens on low-income working households by coordinating, to the maximum extent practicable, verification practices under this Act and verification practices under titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq. and 1397aa et seq.).

‘(ii) ELIGIBILITY- To be eligible to conduct a pilot project under clause (i), a State must have an automation system with the capacity to verify through electronic records the most common sources of incomes under this Act and titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act.

‘(iii) ADMINISTRATION- The Secretary and the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall adjust procedures under this Act and titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act, to the extent each of the Secretaries determines appropriate, to facilitate pilot projects under clause (i).

‘(3) PREFERENCES- In selecting pilot projects under this subsection, the Secretary shall provide a preference to projects that--

‘(A) operate in rural areas; or

‘(B) benefit low-income households residing in remote rural areas.

‘(4) WAIVER- To reduce travel and paperwork burdens on eligible households, the Secretary may waive requirements under sections 6(c) and 11 (e)(3) for pilot projects conducted under this subsection.

‘(5) EVALUATION OF PILOT PROJECTS- Any State conducting a pilot project under this subsection shall provide to the Secretary, in accordance with standards established by the Secretary, an evaluation of the effectiveness of the project.

‘(6) FUNDING- Of funds made available under section 18 for each of fiscal years 2001 and 2002, the Secretary shall use--

‘(A) \$10,000,000 to pay 75 percent of the additional costs incurred by State agencies to conduct pilot projects under paragraph 2(A); and

‘(B) \$500,000 to pay 75 percent of the costs of evaluating pilot projects conducted under paragraph 2(B).’

(c) INNOVATIVE PARTICIPATION STRATEGIES- Section 17 of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2026) is amended by adding at the end the following:

‘(1) IN GENERAL- The Secretary shall conduct demonstration projects to evaluate the feasibility and desirability of allowing eligible households to participate in the food stamp program through the use of the Internet and telephones instead of through in-office visits and interviews. **0161**

‘(2) PREFERENCES- The Secretary shall provide a preference under this subsection to projects that--

‘(A)(i) are conducted in rural areas; or

‘(ii) serve eligible households in remote locations; and

‘(B) are collaborative efforts between State agencies and nonprofit community groups.

‘(m) GRANTS FOR PARTNERSHIPS AND TECHNOLOGY-

‘(1) IN GENERAL- The Secretary shall provide grants to State agencies and nonprofit organizations to conduct projects to improve access to the food stamp program through partnerships and innovative technology.

‘(2) PRIORITY- In providing grants under this subsection, the Secretary shall give priority to projects that focus on households with low food stamp participation.

‘(n) GRANTS FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND INNOVATIVE OUTREACH STRATEGIES-

‘(1) ESTABLISHMENT- The Secretary shall establish a program to award grants to eligible organizations described in paragraph (2)--

‘(A) to develop and test innovative strategies to ensure that low-income needy eligible households that contain 1 or more members that are former or current recipients of benefits under a State program established under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42

U.S.C. 601 et seq.) continue to receive benefits under this Act if the households meet the requirements of this Act;

‘(B) to help ensure that households that have applied for benefits under a State program established under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act, but that did not receive the benefits because of State requirements or ineligibility for the benefits, are aware of the availability of, and are provided assistance in receiving, benefits under this Act if the households meet the requirements of this Act;

‘(C) to conduct outreach to households with earned income that is at or above the income eligibility limits for benefits under a State program established under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act if the households meet the requirements of this Act; and

‘(D) to conduct outreach to households with children if the households meet the requirements of this Act.

‘(2) ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS-

‘(A) IN GENERAL- Grants under paragraph (1) may be provided to--

‘(i) food banks, food rescue organizations, faith-based organizations, and other organizations that supply food to low-income households;

‘(ii) schools, school districts, health clinics, non-profit day care centers, Head Start agencies

under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 983 1 et seq.), Healthy Start agencies under section 301 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 241), and State agencies and local agencies providing assistance under the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children established under section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786);

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‘(iii) local agencies that operate child nutrition programs (as those terms are defined in section 25(b) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1769f(b)); and

‘(iv) other organizations designated by the Secretary.

‘(B) GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF RECIPIENTS-

‘(i) IN GENERAL- Subject to clause (ii), the Secretary shall select, from all eligible applications, at least 1 recipient to receive a grant under this subsection from--

‘(1) each region of the Department of Agriculture; and

‘(II) in addition to recipients selected under subclause (I), each rural or urban area determined to be appropriate by the Secretary.

‘(ii) EXCEPTION- The Secretary shall not be required to award grants based on the geographical guidelines under clause (i) to the extent that the Secretary determines that an insufficient number of eligible grant applications has been received.

‘(3) CRITERIA- The Secretary shall develop criteria for awarding grants under paragraph (1) that are based on--

‘(A) the demonstrated record of an organization in serving low-income households;

‘(B) the ability of an organization to reach hard-to-serve households;

‘(C) the level of innovation in the proposals submitted in the application of an organization for a grant; and

‘(D) the development of partnerships between the public and private sector entities and the community.

‘(4) ADMINISTRATION-

‘(A) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS- Not more than 5 percent of the funds made available for the grant program under paragraph (5) shall be used by the Secretary for administrative costs incurred in carrying out this subsection.

‘(B) PROGRAM EVALUATIONS-

‘(i) IN GENERAL- The Secretary shall conduct evaluations of programs funded by grants under this subsection.

‘(ii) LIMITATION- Not more than 20 percent of funds made available for the grant program under paragraph (5) shall be used for program evaluations under clause (i).

‘(5) FUNDING- Of funds made available under section 18 for each of fiscal years 2001 and 2002, the



Secretary shall use \$1 0,000,000 to carry out the grant program under this subsection.’.

**SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL COMMODITIES UNDER EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

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Section 214 of the Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983 (7 U.S.C. 7515) is amended by adding at the end the following:

‘(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS-

‘(1) IN GENERAL- In addition to any other funds that are made available to carry out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated to purchase and make available additional commodities under this section \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2002 through 2006.

‘(2) DIRECT EXPENSES- Not less than 50 percent of the amount made available under paragraph (1) shall be used to pay direct expenses (as defined in section 204(a)(2)) incurred by emergency feeding organizations to distribute additional commodities to needy persons.’.

*END*