

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1784

As Passed Senate, March 29, 2023

Title: An act relating to addressing hunger relief.

Brief Description: Concerning hunger relief.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by 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 History: Passed House: 2/27/23, 95-0.

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 3/13/23, 3/16/23 [DP].

Floor Activity: Passed Senate: 3/29/23, 49-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Appropriates a total of \$28 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.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Rolfes, Chair; Robinson, Vice Chair, Operating & Revenue; Wilson, L., Ranking Member, Operating; Gildon, Assistant Ranking Member, Operating; Schoesler, Ranking Member, Capital; Warnick, Assistant Ranking Member, Capital; Billig, Boehnke, Braun, Conway, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Hunt, Keiser, Muzzall, Nguyen, Pedersen, Saldaña, Torres, Van De Wege, Wagoner and Wellman.

Staff: Julie Murray (786-7711)

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.

Background: The United States Department of Agriculture Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), called Basic Food Assistance 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 Assistance. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, signed by President Biden on December 29, 2022, ends this temporary emergency support beginning in March 2023.

In addition to Basic Food Assistance, several state agencies operate food assistance programs:

- 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) 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; and
- the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Aging and Long-Term Support Administration (ALTSA) 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: An appropriation of \$28 million is made to the state general fund in fiscal year 2023, as follows:

- \$20 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 million for FVIP at DOH; and
- \$6 million for DSHS-ALTSA to provide to the AAAs for senior nutrition services:
 1. the AAAs must prioritize services for seniors most impacted by the loss of federal resources for Basic Food Assistance that were provided during the COVID-19 pandemic;
 2. funding may also be used for outreach activities that target this population.

Appropriation: The bill contains an appropriation totaling \$28,000,000 from the general fund.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Choosing between food, medication, and rent is a decision seniors make every day. There is a growing need for food resources and this bill includes critical resources to address the loss of food aid. It will get those resources to those who are in need now and will continue to be in the future. Flexible funding released quickly helps ensure people are fed.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Lynn Kimball, Washington Association of Area Agencies on Aging; Linda Nageotte, Food Lifeline; Brian Clark; Miranda Wilson, Helping Hands Food Bank; Charlie Thompson, North Kitsap Fishline; Ahndrea Blue, MADF/Eloise's Cooking Pot Good Bank.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.