



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 437

January Session, 2025

Substitute Senate Bill No. 1418

Senate, April 2, 2025

The Committee on Human Services reported through SEN. LESSER of the 9th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT REDUCING BARRIERS TO FOOD SECURITY.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) As used in this section,
2 "food as medicine" has the same meaning as provided in section 17b-
3 790c of the general statutes. The Commissioner of Social Services shall
4 apply for a Medicaid waiver under Section 1115 of the Social Security
5 Act to provide Medicaid coverage for food as medicine.

6 (b) Not later than January 1, 2026, the commissioner shall file a report,
7 in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,
8 with the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
9 cognizance of matters relating to human services and public health on
10 the number of Medicaid beneficiaries receiving food as medicine and
11 any available data on the effect of food as medicine on the chronic health
12 conditions of such beneficiaries.

13 Sec. 2. Section 17b-105a of the general statutes is amended by adding
14 subsections (e) and (f) as follows (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

15 (NEW) (e) The Commissioner of Social Services shall, within
16 available appropriations, increase the minimum monthly supplemental
17 nutrition assistance benefit to ninety-five dollars.

18 (NEW) (f) Not later than September 1, 2025, the Commissioner of
19 Social Services, in consultation with the Commissioner of Agriculture,
20 shall, within available appropriations, establish a healthy food incentive
21 program under which supplemental nutrition assistance beneficiaries,
22 who purchase fresh produce at certified farmers' markets, shall be
23 credited one dollar in supplemental nutrition assistance benefits for
24 every one dollar they spend in such benefits on such purchases,
25 provided the credit shall not exceed fifty dollars monthly. For purposes
26 of this subsection, "fresh produce" and "certified farmers' market" have
27 the same meanings as provided in section 22-6r.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	July 1, 2025	New section
Sec. 2	July 1, 2025	17b-105a(e) and (f)

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 2(f), "in such benefits" was added for clarity.

HS Joint Favorable Subst.

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Social Services, Dept.	GF - Cost	\$18.8 million	\$18 million
Social Services, Dept.	GF - Cost	See Below	See Below
Resources of the General Fund	GF - Revenue Gain	375,000	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

Section 1 results in a cost to the Department of Social Services (DSS) associated with applying for an 1115 Medicaid waiver to provide Medicaid coverage for food as medicine. DSS will incur costs of approximately \$750,000 for contractual support to develop the waiver, with an associated federal grants revenue gain of \$375,000. The state will also incur programmatic costs to provide Medicaid coverage for food as medicine. The extent of such costs depends on the scope and structure of the program.

Section 2 results in a cost of approximately \$18 million annually to reflect increasing the minimum monthly supplemental nutrition assistance benefit to from \$23 to \$95. Based on household payments made in January 2025, increasing the minimum monthly payment to \$95 costs an additional \$1.5 million per month. DSS may incur administrative costs (with a corresponding revenue gain to reflect the federal share of expenditures) if system changes are required to meet the provisions of the bill.

Section 2 also results in a cost to DSS resulting from increased SNAP payments associated with establishing a healthy food incentive program, by 9/1/25. The program gives SNAP beneficiaries \$1 for every dollar in SNAP benefits they spend on fresh produce at certified farmers' markets, up to \$50 per month. For context, there are approximately 224,000 households receiving SNAP benefits in the state. For purposes of an example, if 10% of households utilize the monthly maximum credit of \$50, the state would incur additional costs of approximately \$1.1 million per month.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to Medicaid coverage and utilization of food as medicine and utilization of the healthy food incentive program.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 1418*****AN ACT REDUCING BARRIERS TO FOOD SECURITY.*****SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) commissioner, within available appropriations, to increase the minimum Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit to \$95. (The current federal minimum monthly SNAP benefit is \$23.)

The bill also requires the DSS commissioner to apply for a federal Section 1115 demonstration waiver to provide Medicaid coverage for “food as medicine,” which is nutritional and meal preparation planning directed by a qualified health professional to treat chronic health conditions (e.g., cardiovascular or cardiopulmonary conditions or diabetes).

While the bill does not set a deadline for applying for the waiver, it requires the DSS commissioner to report to the Human Services and Public Health committees by January 1, 2026, on the number of Medicaid beneficiaries receiving food as medicine and any available data on the effect it has on their chronic health conditions. (It is unlikely that DSS will develop and receive federal approval for a waiver and implement a program in time to comply with this reporting requirement.)

Lastly, the bill requires the DSS commissioner to establish, within available appropriations, a healthy food incentive program. She must do this by September 1, 2025, and in consultation with the Department of Agriculture (DoAg) commissioner.

Under the bill, this program gives SNAP beneficiaries a one-dollar credit for every dollar in SNAP benefits that they spend on fresh

produce (unprocessed fruits and vegetables) at certified farmers' markets (i.e those the DoAg commissioner authorizes), up to \$50 per month.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 16 Nay 6 (03/13/2025)