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## **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)