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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Rubio ORIGINAL DATE 3/9/17
LAST UPDATED _____ HM 76
SHORT TITLE SNAP Program for Fresh, Healthy Food SB _____
ANALYST Boerner

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY17	FY18	FY19	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total		NFI	NFI	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

No Responses Received

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

None noted.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

A food desert refers to a community lacking fresh fruit, vegetables, and other healthful whole foods, usually found in impoverished areas. This is largely due to a lack of grocery stores, farmers' markets, and healthy food providers.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture web page:

“USDA has taken many steps in the last several years to strengthen SNAP and increase access to healthy foods. Recently, USDA announced a purchase and delivery pilot, which is designed for non-profits and government entities to improve access to groceries solely for homebound elderly and disabled SNAP participants. USDA also provided funding to incentivize participants in SNAP to purchase more healthy fruits and vegetables through the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Program, increased farmers market participation in SNAP to improve access to fresh and nutritious food, and

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announced final changes to increase access to healthy food choices for SNAP participants by requiring authorized retail establishments to offer a larger inventory and variety of healthy food options.”

In January 2017, USDA announced seven retail firms selected to take part in a pilot designed to enable SNAP participants to purchase their groceries online. The two-year pilot is expected to begin in summer 2017.

"Online purchasing is a potential lifeline for SNAP participants living in urban neighborhoods and rural communities where access to healthy food choices can be limited," USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack said. "We're looking forward to being able to bring the benefits of the online market to low-income Americans participating in SNAP."

The pilot states include: Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Washington, Pennsylvania and Iowa. The firms selected represent a variety of store types, including national online retailers as well as large grocery chains and smaller, regional networks to appropriately test online SNAP purchasing in different settings. Pilots will take place in both rural and urban areas, marking the next critical step in bringing the online purchasing option to SNAP clients.

CB/al