



LEGISLATIVE FISCAL OFFICE
Fiscal Note

Fiscal Note On: **SB 415** SLS 26RS 346
 Bill Text Version: **ENROLLED**
 Opp. Chamb. Action:
 Proposed Amd.:
 Sub. Bill For.:

Date: May 26, 2026	8:04 AM	Author: ABRAHAM
Dept./Agy.: Louisiana Department of Health		
Subject: Creates the Empower Louisiana Food Purchase Program		Analyst: Anthony Shamis

HEALTH DEPARTMENT EN INCREASE GF EX See Note Page 1 of 1
 Creates the Empower Louisiana Food Purchase Program. (8/1/26)

Proposed law creates the Empower Louisiana Food Purchase Program. The Louisiana Department of Health shall establish and administer the Empower Louisiana Food Purchase Program. The program shall make restricted-use food purchase cards available for issuance through qualified nonprofit organizations. Proposed law requires LDH to partner with qualified nonprofit organizations that operate food assistance programs in Louisiana. Proposed law provides that LDH may implement the program as a pilot program in one administrative region of the state and may expand the program as determined by the secretary. Each qualified nonprofit organization shall be responsible for funding any purchase cards issued by the organization, accept charitable contributions to support the program, and establish a process to allow individuals to provide funding for cards. Proposed law provides that nothing in this measure shall be construed to create a public entitlement, require participation, authorize federal funding, or merge the program with SNAP. Benefits provided pursuant to proposed law shall be considered charitable food assistance and shall not be construed as wages, compensation, or remuneration to the recipient. Proposed law requires LDH to generate aggregate annual transaction reports, which participating nonprofits shall reconcile to their internal records. Proposed law requires LDH to submit a report evaluating the program to the Senate and House Committees on Health and Welfare, no later than March 1, 2027. Proposed law requires LDH to promulgate rules and regulations in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act. Effective August 1, 2026. Proposed law requires LDH to fulfill the requirements of this measure using existing staff and resources.

EXPENDITURES	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Local Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Annual Total

REVENUES	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Local Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Annual Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

EXPENDITURE EXPLANATION

Proposed law is anticipated to increase in SGF expenditures by an indeterminable amount within the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), Medical Vendor Administration Program. Proposed law directs LDH to establish the Empower Louisiana Food Purchase Program using existing staff and resources. LDH indicates that expenditures associated with the additional administrative workload required to implement the program will be absorbed by the department.

Proposed law authorizes LDH to partner with qualified nonprofit organizations that operate food assistance programs in Louisiana to implement a pilot program in one administrative region of the state, with the option to expand the program at the discretion of the secretary. LDH will administer this program separately from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program. Additionally, LDH is required to submit a report evaluating the program to the Senate and House Committees on Health and Welfare no later than March 1, 2027.

Information initially provided by LDH indicated that implementation of the program would require filling two (2) existing vacant T.O. positions. However, a Senate floor amendment requires that LDH implement the provisions of proposed law using existing staff and resources. Subsequent information provided by LDH reflects that the additional administrative workload will be absorbed within the department; however, no specific methodology or reallocation plan has been identified. The LFO cannot independently verify whether LDH has sufficient capacity within currently filled positions to implement the provisions of proposed law without utilizing vacant T.O. positions.

Based on LDH's original fiscal note worksheet, the department anticipated the need for two (2) additional T.O. positions, estimated at \$208,909 for 12 months of funding in FY 27, utilizing currently appropriated vacant positions to administer the program. This estimate includes salary and related benefits for one (1) Economic Stability Consultant and one (1) Economic Stability Specialist, with related benefits calculated at 50% of salaries. The midpoint salary for an Economic Stability Consultant is \$76,627, with related benefits of \$38,314, for a total estimated cost of \$114,941. The midpoint salary for an Economic Stability Specialist is \$62,645, with related benefits of \$31,323, for a total estimated cost of \$93,968.

In addition to these positions, the LFO assumes that associated operating expenses (travel, supplies, telephone lines/data ports, and printing) and equipment (computers, monitors, desks, and chairs) will be necessary. However, LDH reports costs will be absorbed using existing departmental resources.

Operating costs of the issuance and usage of food purchase cards is assumed to be the responsibility of qualified nonprofit organizations and individuals using the cards.

REVENUE EXPLANATION

There is no anticipated direct material effect on governmental revenues as a result of this measure.

Senate Dual Referral Rules
 13.5.1 >= \$100,000 Annual Fiscal Cost {S & H}
 13.5.2 >= \$500,000 Annual Tax or Fee Change {S & H}

House
 6.8(F)(1) >= \$100,000 SGF Fiscal Cost {H & S}
 6.8(G) >= \$500,000 Tax or Fee Increase or a Net Fee Decrease {S}

Alan M. Boxberger
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 Legislative Fiscal Officer