

Regular Session, 2014

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 20

BY SENATORS HEITMEIER AND DORSEY-COLOMB

HEALTH/HOSPITALS DEPT. Directs Department of Health and Hospitals to submit a state plan amendment to the federal government that will permit WIC cash value vouchers to be used at farmers' markets.

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To direct the Department of Health and Hospitals to submit a state plan amendment to the
3 United States Department of Agriculture for the Special Supplemental Nutrition
4 Program for Women, Infants, and Children, popularly known as "WIC", to provide
5 for the use of WIC cash value vouchers at farmers' markets.

6 WHEREAS, the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, hereinafter "FMNP", was
7 established by Congress in 1992 to provide fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits and
8 vegetables for sale to WIC participants; and

9 WHEREAS, through FMNP, Congress sought to expand the awareness and use of
10 and sales at farmers' markets as these outlets began to expand across the United States; and

11 WHEREAS, through the years of the WIC program, Congress has made numerous
12 attempts to ensure that the healthiest options are available for purchase by those eligible to
13 receive WIC benefits; and

14 WHEREAS, as large supermarkets with substantial produce departments continue
15 to be unavailable to substantial numbers of those receiving WIC benefits, farmers' markets
16 have expanded in many of these areas in order to bring more nutritious options to WIC
17 beneficiaries; and

18 WHEREAS, over the more than twenty years of the FMNP, farmers' markets have

1 expanded in Louisiana and have become more available for many Louisiana citizens,
2 providing both a source of fresh nutritious foods and a market for the farmers of these more
3 nutritious products; and

4 WHEREAS, as of 2012, more than twenty states were offering the option of spending
5 WIC vouchers at farmers' markets operating within those states; and

6 WHEREAS, direct marketing of farm products through farmers' markets continues
7 to be an important sales outlet for agricultural producers nationwide and Louisiana continues
8 to expand access to farmers' markets throughout the state; and

9 WHEREAS, while these markets have continued to grow in popularity primarily due
10 to the growing consumer interest in obtaining fresh products directly from the farm, it
11 follows logically that WIC participants would have the same interest in the availability of
12 fresh food products direct from the farm.

13 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
14 direct the Department of Health and Hospitals to submit a state plan amendment to the
15 United States Department of Agriculture for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program
16 for Women, Infants, and Children to provide for the use of WIC cash value vouchers at
17 farmers' markets.

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
19 secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals.

The original instrument was prepared by Mary Dozier O'Brien. The following digest, which does not constitute a part of the legislative instrument, was prepared by Christopher D. Adams.

DIGEST

Heitmeier

SCR No. 20

Directs DHH to submit a state plan amendment to the WIC program, to provide for participation of Louisiana farmers in the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, in which farmers agree to accept vouchers from participants in the WIC program for fresh, nutritious, locally-grown foods.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Health and Welfare to the original bill

1. Directs DHH to submit a state plan amendment to the United States Department of Agriculture, instead of Medicaid, to permit the use of WIC cash value vouchers at farmers' markets.