
DIGEST

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Jefferson

HB No. 1213

Abstract: Provides for continuance of nutrition assistance for certain retirees whose SNAP benefits are reduced or eliminated due to income gained from a cost-of-living adjustment in retirement income.

Proposed law provides the following legislative findings:

- (1) A phenomenon known as the "cliff" is an unfortunate feature of many assistance programs and occurs when a gain in income results in a loss of assistance in an amount greater than the income gain, and more than offsets the benefit that a person derives from earning a higher income. This perverse incentive whereby earning a higher income has the effect of penalizing the earner is harmful to financially vulnerable individuals and families.
- (2) A particularly onerous "cliff" occurs in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) of this state when a senior citizen receives a cost-of-living increase in his retirement income that, in turn, causes him to lose SNAP benefits in an amount greater than his cost-of-living increase or to lose eligibility for SNAP benefits entirely.

Proposed law requires the Department of Children and Family Services to establish a program for maintaining or continuing nutrition assistance to retirees who are 75 years of age or older and experience a decrease in SNAP benefits or a termination of SNAP eligibility due to having received a nonelective cost-of-living adjustment from the Social Security Administration's retirement benefits program, a public pension program, or any other retirement system, plan, or fund.

Proposed law provides that the source of monies for the program established by proposed law may include any appropriation by the legislature of state funds or federal funds from any source.

(Adds R.S. 46:311-313)