

2026 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 415

BY SENATOR ABRAHAM

HEALTH DEPARTMENT. Creates the Empower Louisiana Food Purchase Program.  
(8/1/26)

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AN ACT

To enact Subpart E of Part II of Chapter 3 of Title 46 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 46:290, relative to food purchase cards; to create the Empower Louisiana Food Purchase Program; to provide for the duties of the Louisiana Department of Health; to provide for criteria for nonprofit organization participation; to provide for funding; to provide for records; to provide for reporting; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. Subpart E of Part II of Chapter 3 of Title 46 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 46:290, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

**SUBPART E. EMPOWER LOUISIANA FOOD PURCHASE PROGRAM**

**§290. Empower Louisiana Food Purchase Program; Louisiana Department of Health**

**A. 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.**

1           **B.(1) The department shall partner with qualified nonprofit**  
2           **organizations that operate food assistance programs in Louisiana.**

3           **(2) To qualify for participation in the program, the organization shall be**  
4           **recognized under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, execute a**  
5           **participation agreement, and comply with reporting requirements established**  
6           **by the department.**

7           **(3) The department may implement the program as a pilot program in**  
8           **one administrative region of the state and may expand the program as**  
9           **determined by the secretary. Upon statewide implementation, the program shall**  
10          **include at least one participating qualified nonprofit organization in each**  
11          **administrative region of the department.**

12           **C. Each qualified nonprofit organization shall:**

13           **(1) Be responsible for funding any purchase cards issued by the**  
14           **organization.**

15           **(2) Establish a process to allow individuals to provide funding for cards.**  
16           **Cards may be issued directly to the individual providing the funds or to another**  
17           **person identified by the individual providing the funds for the card.**

18           **D. Nothing in this Section shall be construed to create a public**  
19           **entitlement, require participation, authorize federal funding, or merge the**  
20           **program with SNAP.**

21           **E. The program shall:**

22           **(1) Operate under a program identifier separate from SNAP.**

23           **(2) Align food items that are allowable for purchase with food items that**  
24           **are eligible for purchase through SNAP.**

25           **(3) Prohibit cash withdrawals and transfers.**

26           **(4) Not access SNAP eligibility or recipient data.**

27           **F. Transaction records shall be generated automatically by the payment**  
28           **processor. The department shall generate aggregate annual transaction reports,**  
29           **which participating nonprofits shall reconcile to their internal records. The**

