ENROLLED

Regular Session, 2011

HOUSE BILL NO. 194

BY REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

AN ACT

To enact Subpart A-1 of Part II of Chapter 3 of Title 46 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 46:236.1, relative to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; to provide for legislative findings; to provide for nutrition education; to establish certain reporting requirements for the Department of Children and Family Services; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. Subpart A-1 of Part II of Chapter 3 of Title 46 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 46:236.1, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

SUBPART A-1. NUTRITION ASSISTANCE

§236.1. Legislative findings; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program educational component; reporting requirements

A. The legislature finds and declares the following:

(1) The program still commonly known as "food stamps" was renamed the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in October 2008. SNAP is administered at the federal level by the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and at the state level by the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, hereafter referred to as "department".

(2) SNAP is the cornerstone of the federal food assistance programs and provides crucial support to needy households and to those making the transition from welfare to work.

(3) By federal policy, SNAP benefits may be used only for the purchase of nonalcoholic beverages and food which is not hot at the point of sale and may not be used to purchase any nonfood items.

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(4) The population of Louisiana has historically encompassed one of the highest proportions of SNAP recipients in the nation.

(5) Federal regulations allow states to administer educational services within the SNAP program. Such services are known as SNAP Education, and are designed to teach food budgeting, proper nutrition, and healthy food choices to SNAP recipients.

(6) It is the public policy of this state to support basic health, human welfare, education, and self-sufficiency among its most vulnerable citizens. Effective educational efforts, including nutrition education, are necessary for this state to promote better health and break its historic cycle of generational poverty.

B. In addition to any SNAP Education services conducted by contractors of the department, the department shall provide printed nutrition education resource materials directly to the heads of all SNAP beneficiary households. The department may develop or utilize materials at its discretion in order to satisfy the provisions of this Subsection, provided that such materials include the Core Nutrition Messages, or any successor resources, developed by FNS. The department shall provide such materials to every head of a SNAP beneficiary household at the following intervals:

(1) At the first issuance of a SNAP electronic benefits transfer card subsequent to the initial determination of eligibility.

(2) In the first correspondence from the department subsequent to a redetermination of eligibility.

(3) Any interval which the department deems advantageous and feasible.

C. The SNAP Education program of this state and all subcontractors and affiliates of such program shall utilize the Core Nutrition Messages, or any successor resources, developed by FNS.

D. On or before March first annually, the department shall submit to the House Committee on Health and Welfare and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare a comprehensive report on the SNAP Education program. The report shall include but not be limited to the following items:

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(1) Analysis and commentary on major health challenges faced by low-income Louisiana families.

(2) Data on SNAP Education participants, including a description of the ideal target population, actual number of participants served, geographic distribution of participants, and participant demographics.

(3) A description of program operations, including details on selection of participants, service delivery, and activities conducted by all SNAP Education program contractors and subcontractors.

(4) Analysis of program outcomes and other significant impacts to SNAP Education service recipients.

(5) Public policy recommendations for enhancing the SNAP Education program and for supporting better health and nutrition generally among low-income families of this state.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____

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