

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 1218
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Health & Human Services
5/11/2001
Engrossed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Federal welfare reform legislation in 1996 denied food stamp benefits to many legal immigrants. Even after a partial restoration of federal food stamp benefits to selected immigrants in 1998, many legal immigrants in Texas are without food stamp benefits. H.B. 1218 requires the Texas Department of Human Services to develop and implement a food assistance program to provide nutritional assistance to lawfully present immigrants.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Health and Human Services Commission or an agency operating part of the medical assistance program in SECTION 1 (Section 33.0024, Human Resources Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 33, Human Resources Code, by adding Section 33.0024, as follows:

Sec. 33.0024. FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR CERTAIN LEGAL IMMIGRANTS. (a) Requires the Health and Human Services Commission or an agency operating part of the medical assistance program (department) by rule to develop and implement a food assistance program to provide nutritional assistance to a lawfully present immigrant who meets certain requirements.

(b) Requires that, subject to Subsection (a), the food assistance program be administered using the same rules with respect to eligibility procedures and benefit levels that are used in administering the food stamp program under this chapter.

(c) Requires the department, in defining a disabled person for purposes of Subsection (a)(4)(C), to consider the definition of disabled member of a household under 7 U.S.C. Section 2012(r), as amended.

SECTION 2. Provides that the food assistance program required by Section 33.0024, Human Resources Code, as added by this Act, is not intended to replace a similar food program providing assistance to certain immigrants ineligible for the federal food stamp program that was authorized by the Texas Board of Human Services, implemented under rules of the Texas Department of Human Services, and in effect immediately before the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2001.