



1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 43

2 WHEREAS, Over 2 million Illinois residents receive
3 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits;
4 this number includes older adults, young children, people with
5 disabilities, and working families; and

6 WHEREAS, Over 60,000 food-insecure Illinois residents
7 enroll or re-enroll in the SNAP program every month; and

8 WHEREAS, The SNAP program is an important component of
9 Illinois' economy that generates over \$3 billion in annual
10 spending; and

11 WHEREAS, Prior to October of 2010, the overwhelming
12 majority of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
13 benefits were distributed on the 1st of the month in Illinois;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Due to the SNAP distribution schedule, customers
16 were relegated to shopping in crowded stores with elevated
17 security, stores were unable to offer a high level of customer
18 service due to the size of the crowds, customers who shopped
19 later in the month found empty store shelves and diminished
20 access to fresh fruits and vegetables, and employees saw their
21 hours cut; and

1 WHEREAS, The narrow SNAP distribution schedule caused
2 enormous operational issues for Illinois grocers and
3 retailers, especially for those businesses that operated in
4 areas with a high density of customers that purchased food with
5 SNAP funds; and

6 WHEREAS, The SNAP distribution schedule also created
7 operational issues for food banks, which experienced an
8 increase in families in need at the end of the month when SNAP
9 benefits ran out; and

10 WHEREAS, In October of 2010, after many meetings with
11 representatives of the grocery industry and non-profit groups
12 that have an interest in food access for low-income residents,
13 the Illinois Department of Human Services instituted a change
14 in how SNAP benefits were distributed to Illinois residents;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, In order to relieve the pressure off of businesses
17 and customers at the 1st of the month, a large number of SNAP
18 customers were shifted from the 1st of the month to the 4th,
19 7th, and 10th of the month over the period of one year with
20 great success; and

21 WHEREAS, The Department of Human Services currently issues

1 SNAP benefits on the 1st, 3rd, 4th, 7th, 8th, 10th, 11th, 14th,
2 17th, 19th, 21st, and 23rd days of the month; and

3 WHEREAS, The Department of Human Services has decided to
4 shrink the SNAP distribution dates to the first 10 days of the
5 month; and

6 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Agriculture
7 (USDA), which controls the funding for the SNAP program, sent a
8 letter to each state encouraging states to stagger SNAP
9 distribution throughout the month; and

10 WHEREAS, This change goes in the opposite direction of the
11 advocacy position taken by the USDA and the movement of other
12 states in recent years, changing their systems to stagger SNAP
13 benefits throughout the month; and

14 WHEREAS, Neither grocers nor poverty and food advocates
15 believe that technology should dictate policy and that more
16 efficient solutions should be achieved to avoid hunger;
17 therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
19 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
20 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that the Task Force on Hunger and the
21 Efficient Distribution of SNAP Benefits is created; and be it

1 further

2 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall consist of the
3 following 10 members, appointed as follows:

4 (1) four legislators, appointed one each by the
5 President of the Senate, the Minority Leader of the Senate, the
6 Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Minority
7 Leader of the House of Representatives;

8 (2) the Secretary of the Illinois Department of Human
9 Services or his or her designee;

10 (3) one person appointed by the Governor to represent a
11 state-wide association exclusively representing retailers;

12 (4) one person appointed by the Governor to represent a
13 state-wide association exclusively representing grocers;

14 (5) one person appointed by the Governor to represent a
15 non-profit organization focusing on advancing justice and
16 opportunity for low-income Illinois residents;

17 (6) one person appointed by the Governor to represent a
18 non-profit organization focusing on ending poverty; and

19 (7) one person appointed by the Governor to represent a
20 food bank that serves a county with over 2 million residents;
21 and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the co-chairs of the Task Force shall invite
23 representatives of the USDA and software contractors to
24 participate in the Task Force; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the designee of the Speaker of the House of
2 Representatives and the designee of the Senate President shall
3 serve as co-chairs of the Task Force; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That the members of the Task Force shall be
5 appointed no later than 30 days after the effective date of
6 this resolution; the members of the Task Force shall not
7 receive compensation; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That the Department of Human Services shall
9 provide administrative support to the Task Force; and be it
10 further

11 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall prepare a report that
12 details how SNAP benefits can be distributed more evenly
13 throughout the month without increasing hunger in the State of
14 Illinois and shall submit this report to the Governor and the
15 General Assembly by October 1, 2013; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the Task Force, upon issuing the report, is
17 dissolved effective October 1, 2013.