

Public Law 103-225
103d Congress

An Act

Mar. 25, 1994

[S. 1926]

Food Stamp
Program
Improvements
Act of 1994.
Inter-
governmental
relations.
7 USC 2011 note.

To amend the Food Stamp Act of 1977 to modify the requirements relating to monthly reporting and staggered issuance of coupons for households residing on Indian reservations, to ensure adequate access to retail food stores by food stamp households, and to maintain the integrity of the food stamp program, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Food Stamp Program Improvements Act of 1994”.

**TITLE I—REPORTING AND STAGGERED
ISSUANCE FOR HOUSEHOLDS ON RES-
ERVATIONS**

SEC. 101. BUDGETING AND MONTHLY REPORTING ON RESERVATIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 6(c)(1) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2015(c)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) by striking clause (ii); and

(B) by redesignating clauses (iii) and (iv) as clauses (ii) and (iii), respectively; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) A State agency may require periodic reporting on a monthly basis by households residing on a reservation only if—

“(i) the State agency reinstates benefits, without requiring a new application, for any household residing on a reservation that submits a report not later than 1 month after the end of the month in which benefits would otherwise be provided;

“(ii) the State agency does not delay, reduce, suspend, or terminate the allotment of a household that submits a report not later than 1 month after the end of the month in which the report is due;

“(iii) on the date of enactment of this subparagraph, the State agency requires households residing on a reservation to file periodic reports on a monthly basis; and

“(iv) the certification period for households residing on a reservation that are required to file periodic reports

on a monthly basis is 2 years, unless the State demonstrates just cause to the Secretary for a shorter certification period.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The second sentence of section 3(c) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 2012(c)) is amended by striking “For” and inserting “Except as provided in section 6(c)(1)(C), for”.

(2) Section 5(f)(2)(C) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 2014(f)(2)(C)) is amended by striking “clauses (i), (ii), (iii), and (iv)” and inserting “clauses (i), (ii), and (iii)”.

SEC. 102. STAGGERED ISSUANCES ON RESERVATIONS.

Section 7(h)(1) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2016(h)(1)) is amended by striking the second sentence and inserting the following new sentence: “Upon the request of the tribal organization that exercises governmental jurisdiction over the reservation, the State agency shall stagger the issuance of benefits for eligible households located on reservations for at least 15 days of a month.”

SEC. 103. GAO STUDY AND REPORT ON ADMINISTRATION OF FOOD STAMP PROGRAM BY TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the feasibility and desirability of—

(1) increasing the opportunity for a tribal organization of an Indian tribe to administer the food stamp program established under the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) in connection with members of the tribe by—

(A) modifying the requirements established under sections 3(n)(2) and 11(d) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 2012(n)(2) and 2020(d));

(B) modifying or eliminating the cost-sharing requirements established for the tribal organization under section 16(a) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 2025); and

(C) taking such other actions as the Comptroller General considers appropriate; and

(2) permitting the tribal organization to establish reasonable and appropriate requirements with respect to issuance, reporting, and certification requirements under the food stamp program for members of the tribe.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than December 1, 1994, the Comptroller General shall report the results of the study required under subsection (a) to the Committee on Agriculture, and the Subcommittee on Native American Affairs of the Committee on Natural Resources, of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, and the Committee on Indian Affairs, of the Senate, so that the results of the study may be considered by the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate during the reauthorization of the food stamp program during 1995.

SEC. 104. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) Section 908 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act Amendments of 1991 (Public Law 102-237; 7 U.S.C. 2015 note) is repealed.

(b) Section 6(c)(4) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2015(c)(4)) is amended by striking “Any” and inserting “Except as provided in paragraph (1)(C), any”.

7 USC 2015 note,
2016 note.

TITLE II—ACCESS TO RETAIL FOOD STORES BY FOOD STAMP HOUSEHOLDS

SEC. 201. FOOD STAMP ACT DEFINITIONS.

Section 3 of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2012) is amended—

(1) in subsection (k)—

(A) by striking “means (1) an establishment” and all that follows through “spices, (2) an establishment” and inserting the following: “means—

“(1) an establishment or house-to-house trade route that sells food for home preparation and consumption and—

“(A) offers for sale, on a continuous basis, a variety of foods in each of the 4 categories of staple foods specified in subsection (u)(1), including perishable foods in at least 2 of the categories; or

“(B) has over 50 percent of the total sales of the establishment or route in staple foods, as determined by visual inspection, sales records, purchase records, counting of stockkeeping units, or other inventory or accounting recordkeeping methods that are customary or reasonable in the retail food industry;

“(2) an establishment”;

(B) by striking “section, (3) a store” and inserting the following: “section;

“(3) a store”; and

(C) by striking “section, and (4) any private” and inserting the following: “section; and

“(4) any private”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(u)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), ‘staple foods’ means foods (as defined in subsection (g)) in the following categories:

“(A) Meat, poultry, or fish.

“(B) Bread or cereals.

“(C) Vegetables or fruits.

“(D) Dairy products.

“(2) ‘Staple foods’ do not include accessory food items, such as coffee, tea, cocoa, carbonated and uncarbonated drinks, candy, condiments, and spices.”.

SEC. 202. PERIODIC NOTICE.

Paragraph (2) of section 9(a) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2018(a)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

“(2) The Secretary shall issue regulations providing for—

“(A) the periodic reauthorization of retail food stores and wholesale food concerns; and

“(B) periodic notice to participating retail food stores and wholesale food concerns of the definitions of ‘retail food store’, ‘staple foods’, ‘eligible foods’, and ‘perishable foods’.”.

SEC. 203. USE AND DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION PROVIDED BY RETAIL FOOD STORES AND WHOLESALE FOOD CONCERNS.

Section 9(c) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2018(c)) is amended—

(1) in the second sentence, by inserting after “disclosed to and used by” the following: “Federal law enforcement and

Regulations.

investigative agencies and law enforcement and investigative agencies of a State government for the purposes of administering or enforcing this Act or any other Federal or State law and the regulations issued under this Act or such law, and”;

(2) by inserting after the second sentence the following new sentence: “Any person who publishes, divulges, discloses, or makes known in any manner or to any extent not authorized by Federal law (including a regulation) any information obtained under this subsection shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned not more than 1 year, or both.”; and

(3) in the last sentence, by striking “Such purposes shall not exclude” and inserting the following: “The regulations shall establish the criteria to be used by the Secretary to determine whether the information is needed. The regulations shall not prohibit”.

SEC. 204. DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS TESTING ACTIVITIES DIRECTED AT TRAFFICKING IN COUPONS.

Section 17 of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2026) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(1) The Secretary shall use up to \$4,000,000 of the funds provided in advance in appropriations Acts for projects authorized by this section to conduct demonstration projects in which State or local food stamp agencies test innovative ideas for working with State or local law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute coupon trafficking.”.

SEC. 205. CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY.

7 USC 2012 note.

An establishment or house-to-house trade route that is otherwise authorized to accept and redeem coupons under the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) on the day before the date of enactment of this Act shall be considered to meet the definition of “retail food store” in section 3(k) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 2012(k)) (as amended by section 201) until the earlier of—

(1) the periodic reauthorization of the establishment or route; or

(2) such time as the eligibility of the establishment or route for continued participation in the food stamp program is evaluated for any reason.

SEC. 206. REPORT ON IMPACT ON RETAIL FOOD STORES.

7 USC 2012 note.

Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall prepare and submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report on the impact of the amendments made by sections 201 and 202 on the involvement of retail food stores in the food stamp program established under the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), including a description of—

(1) the numbers and types of stores that were newly authorized to participate in the food stamp program after implementation of the amendments;

(2) the numbers and types of stores that were withdrawn from the food stamp program after implementation of the amendments;

(3) the procedures used by the Secretary, and the adequacy of the procedures used, to determine the eligibility of stores

to participate in the food stamp program and to authorize and reauthorize the stores to participate in the food stamp program;

(4) the adequacy of the guidance provided by the Secretary to retail food stores concerning—

(A) the definitions of “retail food store”, “staple foods”, “eligible foods”, and “perishable foods” for purposes of the food stamp program; and

(B) eligibility criteria for stores to participate in the food stamp program; and

(5) an assessment of whether the amendment to the definition of “retail food store” under section 3(k) of such Act (as amended by section 201(1)) has had an adverse effect on the integrity of the food stamp program.

Approved March 25, 1994.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 1926 (H.R. 3436):

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 103-352 accompanying H.R. 3436 (Comm. on Agriculture).
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Vol. 139 (1993): Nov. 10, H.R. 3436 considered and passed House.

Vol. 140 (1994): Mar. 11, S. 1926 considered and passed Senate.

Mar. 16, considered and passed House.