

Senate File 2039 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 2039

BY TRONE GARRIOTT, DONAHUE,
WAHLS, JOCHUM, PETERSEN,
CELSI, WINCKLER, GIDDENS,
T. TAYLOR, WEINER, DOTZLER,
BISIGNANO, BOULTON, KNOX,
QUIRMBACH, and BENNETT

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to the federal summer electronic benefits
2 transfer for children program, making an appropriation,
3 and including effective date and retroactive applicability
4 provisions.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. FINDINGS. The general assembly finds all of the
2 following:

3 1. The Iowa general assembly, in conjunction with state
4 agencies, has a duty to ensure Iowa children have access to
5 food and essential nutrition regardless of income level.

6 2. Summer can be a time of increased hunger for children who
7 no longer have access to regular school lunches.

8 3. Iowa is currently experiencing a food insecurity crisis
9 as food banks and other charitable organizations continue to
10 report record high demand from Iowans in need.

11 4. There are an estimated two hundred forty thousand
12 children in Iowa who would be eligible to receive benefits
13 under the summer electronic benefits transfer (EBT) for
14 children program, as established as a permanent program under
15 the federal Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, 42 U.S.C.
16 §1762.

17 5. When Iowans are struggling financially, they are more
18 likely to buy less expensive foods, which are high in calories
19 and low in nutritional value.

20 6. Summer congregate and noncongregate meals are not always
21 easily accessible to families in need, particularly in rural
22 Iowa.

23 7. The summer EBT for children program offered by the
24 federal government would provide an estimated twenty-nine
25 million dollars to address the food insecurity crisis, which
26 not only feeds children but stimulates local economic activity.

27 8. Iowa ended fiscal year 2022-2023 with a general fund
28 balance of one billion eight hundred thirty-one million
29 dollars. Iowa can afford to feed hungry children and cover the
30 costs of administering the summer EBT for children program.

31 Sec. 2. PARTICIPATION IN SUMMER ELECTRONIC BENEFITS
32 TRANSFER (EBT) FOR CHILDREN PROGRAM — APPROPRIATION.

33 1. The department of health and human services, in
34 coordination with the department of education, shall do all of
35 the following:

1 a. Immediately upon the effective date of this Act, submit a
2 letter of intent to the United States secretary of agriculture
3 to apply for and participate in the summer EBT for children
4 program offered by the United States department of agriculture
5 food and nutrition service during summer 2024.

6 b. Coordinate with the United States department of
7 agriculture food and nutrition service to develop a successful
8 management and administration plan for the summer EBT for
9 children program, and submit the plan to the United States
10 secretary of agriculture by February 15, 2024.

11 2. There is appropriated from the general fund of the state
12 to the department of health and human services for the fiscal
13 year beginning July 1, 2023, a sufficient amount to cover the
14 costs of administering the summer EBT for children program
15 during summer 2024. Moneys appropriated under this section
16 that remain unexpended or unencumbered at the close of the
17 fiscal year shall not revert but shall remain available for
18 expenditure in the succeeding fiscal year.

19 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act, being deemed of immediate
20 importance, takes effect upon enactment.

21 Sec. 4. RETROACTIVE APPLICABILITY. This Act applies
22 retroactively to July 1, 2023.

23 EXPLANATION

24 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
25 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

26 This bill relates to the summer electronic benefits transfer
27 (EBT) for children program made permanent by federal law under
28 the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, administered by
29 the United States department of agriculture (USDA) food and
30 nutrition service.

31 The bill includes findings relating to food insecurity in
32 the state including that it is estimated that approximately
33 240,000 children would be eligible to receive benefits under
34 the summer EBT for children program; that when Iowans are
35 struggling financially, they are more likely to buy less

1 expensive foods, high in calories and low in nutritional value;
2 and that the summer EBT for children program would provide an
3 estimated \$29 million to address the food insecurity crisis
4 which not only feeds children but stimulates local economic
5 activity.

6 The bill requires the department of health and human
7 services (HHS), in coordination with the department of
8 education, to immediately upon the effective date of the bill
9 submit a letter of intent to apply for and participate in
10 the summer EBT program for children during summer 2024, to
11 coordinate with the USDA to develop a successful management and
12 administration plan for the summer EBT program for children,
13 and to submit the plan to the USDA by February 15, 2024.

14 The bill appropriates from the general fund of the state
15 to HHS for fiscal year 2023-2024 a sufficient amount to cover
16 the costs of administering the summer EBT program for children
17 during summer 2024.

18 The bill takes effect upon enactment and is retroactively
19 applicable to July 1, 2023.