

1 State of Arkansas  
2 79th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 1993

# A Bill

ACT 134 OF 1993  
HOUSE BILL 1033

4 By: Representatives Smith, *Flanagin, Roberts and Walker*

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## For An Act To Be Entitled

8 "AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE ECONOMIC & MEDICAL SERVICES  
9 DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO ESTABLISH  
10 A PROGRAM UTILIZING AN ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER SYSTEM  
11 FOR THE DISTRIBUTION AND REDEMPTION OF FOOD STAMP CREDITS;  
12 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

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### Subtitle

15 "AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN  
16 SERVICES TO ESTABLISH A PROGRAM UTILIZING AN  
17 ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER SYSTEM FOR THE  
18 DISTRIBUTION AND REDEMPTION OF FOOD STAMPS."

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20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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22 SECTION 1. LEGISLATIVE PURPOSE. The Seventy-Ninth General Assembly  
23 hereby acknowledges that the federal food stamp program as it is now administered in  
24 Arkansas is subject to misuse and is demeaning to recipients. There are, however, electronic  
25 benefit transfer systems being used in other states that are more cost-effective, less subject to  
26 abuse, and are generally better-received by retailers and food stamp recipients. It is the  
27 purpose of this Act to establish a program utilizing an electronic benefit transfer system,  
28 whereby food stamp recipients use a card similar to a credit card instead of paper coupons to  
29 participate in the federal food stamp program.

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31 SECTION 2. (a) The Economic & Medical Services Division of the *Department of*  
32 *Human Services shall establish a program utilizing an electronic benefit transfer system for*  
33 *the distribution and redemption of food stamps, whereby food stamp recipients will no longer*  
34 *use paper coupons to participate in the federal food stamp program.*

35 (b) The Director of the Economic & Medical Services Division of the Department of  
36 Human Services shall report on the status of the program to the Joint Interim Committee on

1 **Public Health, Welfare, and Labor by July 15, 1994.**

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3 **SECTION 3. All provisions of this act of a general and permanent nature are**  
4 **amendatory to the Arkansas Code of 1987 Annotated and the Arkansas Code Revision**  
5 **Commission shall incorporate the same in the Code.**

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7 **SECTION 4. If any provision of this act or the application thereof to any person or**  
8 **circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of**  
9 **the act which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end**  
10 **the provisions of this act are declared to be severable.**

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12 **SECTION 5. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this act are hereby repealed.**

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14 **SECTION 6. EMERGENCY. It is hereby found and determined by the Seventy-**  
15 **Ninth General Assembly that the system used in Arkansas to administer the federal food stamp**  
16 **program has become cost-prohibitive, is subject to abuse, and is an ever-increasing burden on**  
17 **the state; that an electronic benefit transfer system, for which the federal government will pay**  
18 **fifty percent (50%) of the costs, is currently being used in several other states and has resulted**  
19 **in considerable savings; that the effectiveness of this Act on July 1, 1993, is essential for an**  
20 **electronic benefit transfer program to be in place *as soon as possible*; that in the event of an**  
21 **extension of the Regular Session, the delay in the effective date of this Act beyond July 1, 1993,**  
22 **could work irreparable harm upon the proper administration and provision of essential**  
23 **governmental programs. Therefore, an emergency is hereby declared to exist and this Act**  
24 **being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall be**  
25 **in full force and effect from and after July 1, 1993.**

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*/s/J. Smith, et al*

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**APPROVED: 2/16/93**