

1 **State of Arkansas**

2 **79th General Assembly**

3 **Regular Session, 1993**

4 **By: Representatives Smith, Flanagan, 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 SERVICES TO
16 ESTABLISH A PROGRAM UTILIZING AN ELECTRONIC BENEFIT
17 TRANSFER SYSTEM FOR THE DISTRIBUTION AND REDEMPTION OF
18 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
24 administered in Arkansas is subject to misuse and is demeaning to recipients.
25 There are, however, electronic benefit transfer systems being used in other
26 states that are more cost-effective, less subject to abuse, and are generally
27 better-received by retailers and food stamp recipients. It is the purpose of
28 this Act to establish a program utilizing an electronic benefit transfer
29 system, whereby food stamp recipients use a card similar to a credit card
30 instead of paper coupons to participate in the federal food stamp program.

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

1 in the federal food stamp program.

2 (b) The Director of the Economic & Medical Services Division of the
3 Department of Human Services shall report on the status of the program to the
4 Joint Interim Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor by July 15, 1994.

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

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11 SECTION 4. If any provision of this act or the application thereof to
12 any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect
13 other provisions or applications of the act which can be given effect without
14 the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this
15 act are declared to be severable.

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18 hereby repealed.

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

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/s/J. Smith, et al

