

1 State of Arkansas
2 89th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2013
4

A Bill

SENATE BILL 1145

5 By: Senator L. Chesterfield
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For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO
9 CONDUCT A STUDY ON CURRENT ASSET LIMITS FOR THE
10 PUBLIC BENEFIT PROGRAMS OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION
11 ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY
12 FAMILIES TO DETERMINE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION
13 EFFECTIVENESS, CONSISTENCY, AND EFFICIENCY, AND THE
14 POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS OF CHANGING ASSET LIMITS; AND
15 FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
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Subtitle

18 REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
19 TO CONDUCT A STUDY TO EVALUATE CURRENT
20 ASSET LIMITS FOR TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR
21 NEEDY FAMILIES AND THE SUPPLEMENTAL
22 NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.
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26 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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28 SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. The General Assembly finds that:

29 (1) Public benefit programs currently restrict eligibility to
30 individuals and families with few or no assets to ensure public resources are
31 accurately allocated to those most in need;

32 (2) However, resource and asset limits disincentivize savings
33 and deter families from making investments, thus potentially increasing the
34 time a family stays on public benefits;

35 (3) Moreover, in theory, asset limits would preclude benefits to
36 Arkansans who are only marginally better off than those who would qualify;



1 (4) Presently, the asset limit for the federal Temporary
2 Assistance for Needy Families program is three thousand dollars (\$3,000) and
3 two thousand dollars (\$2,000) for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance
4 Program;

5 (5) While state officials could raise or eliminate the asset
6 limits for both programs, such a change may affect all benefit programs
7 administered by the Department of Human Services;

8 (6) A more prudent approach would be to analyze the potential
9 effects of raising or eliminating the asset limits on the Supplemental
10 Nutrition Assistance Program and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; and

11 (7) Therefore, the Eighty-ninth General Assembly directs the
12 Department of Human Services to conduct a study on the program effectiveness,
13 consistency, and efficiency of administering public benefits with asset
14 limits.

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16 SECTION 2. DO NOT CODIFY. (a) The Department of Human Services shall
17 conduct a study to:

18 (1) Determine the number of applicants denied access to the
19 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Temporary Assistance for Needy
20 Families based on resource limits or asset limits, or both;

21 (2) Determine the cost associated with verifying resource limits
22 and asset limits, including without limitation staff time and department
23 resources; and

24 (3) Consider the cost implications related to changing the
25 resource limits and asset limits, including without limitation a review and
26 evaluation of information on practices, policies, and trends regarding asset
27 limits, and the applicability of resource limits and asset limits to the
28 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Temporary Assistance for Needy
29 Families.

30 (b) No later than thirty (30) days after the effective date of this
31 act, the department shall report on findings under this section along with
32 recommendations for further action and for proposed legislation for
33 appropriate changes to resource limits and asset limits to the Legislative
34 Council.

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