

SENATE
STATE OF MINNESOTA
NINETY-FOURTH SESSION

S.F. No. 1858

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DATE
02/24/2025

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OFFICIAL STATUS

Introduction and first reading
Referred to Health and Human Services

1.1

A bill for an act

1.2 relating to health; transferring the healthy eating, here at home program to the
1.3 Department of Health; establishing the fresh bucks pilot program; requiring a
1.4 report; appropriating money; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 138.912,
1.5 subdivisions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6; repealing Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 138.912,
1.6 subdivision 7.

1.7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.8 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 138.912, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

1.9 Subdivision 1. **Establishment.** The healthy eating, here at home program is established
1.10 to provide incentives for low-income Minnesotans to use federal Supplemental Nutrition
1.11 Assistance Program (SNAP) or Summer EBT benefits for healthy purchases at
1.12 Minnesota-based farmers' markets, mobile markets, and direct-farmer sales, including
1.13 community-supported agriculture shares.

1.14 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 138.912, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

1.15 Subd. 2. **Definitions.** (a) The definitions in this subdivision apply to this section.

1.16 (b) "Healthy eating, here at home" means a program administered by the ~~Minnesota~~
1.17 ~~Humanities Center~~ Department of Health to provide incentives for low-income Minnesotans
1.18 to use SNAP or Summer EBT benefits for healthy purchases at Minnesota-based farmers'
1.19 markets.

1.20 (c) "Healthy purchases" means SNAP-eligible foods.

2.1 (d) "Minnesota-based farmers' market" means a physical market as defined in section
2.2 28A.151, subdivision 1, paragraph (b), and also includes mobile markets and direct-farmer
2.3 sales, including through a community-supported agriculture model.

2.4 (e) "Voucher" means a physical or electronic credit.

2.5 (f) "Eligible household" means an individual or family that is determined to be a recipient
2.6 of SNAP or Summer EBT.

2.7 Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 138.912, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

2.8 **Subd. 3. Grants.** The ~~Minnesota Humanities Center~~ Department of Health shall allocate
2.9 grant funds to nonprofit organizations that work with Minnesota-based farmers' markets to
2.10 provide up to \$10 vouchers to SNAP or Summer EBT participants who use electronic
2.11 benefits transfer (EBT) cards for healthy purchases. Funds may also be provided for vouchers
2.12 distributed through nonprofit organizations engaged in healthy cooking and food education
2.13 outreach to eligible households for use at farmers' markets. Funds appropriated under this
2.14 section may not be used for healthy cooking classes or food education outreach. When
2.15 awarding grants, the ~~Minnesota Humanities Center~~ Department of Health must consider
2.16 how the nonprofit organizations will achieve geographic balance, including specific efforts
2.17 to reach eligible households across the state, and the organizations' capacity to manage the
2.18 programming and outreach.

2.19 Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 138.912, subdivision 4, is amended to read:

2.20 **Subd. 4. Household eligibility; participation.** To be eligible for a healthy eating, here
2.21 at home voucher, an eligible household must meet the Minnesota SNAP or Summer EBT
2.22 eligibility requirements under section 142F.10.

2.23 Sec. 5. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 138.912, subdivision 6, is amended to read:

2.24 **Subd. 6. Program reporting.** The nonprofit organizations that receive grant funds must
2.25 report annually to the ~~Minnesota Humanities Center~~ Department of Health with information
2.26 regarding the operation of the program, including the number of vouchers issued and the
2.27 number of people served. To the extent practicable, the nonprofit organizations must report
2.28 on the usage of the vouchers and evaluate the program's effectiveness.

3.1 **Sec. 6. FRESH BUCKS PILOT PROGRAM.**

3.2 Subdivision 1. Establishment. (a) The fresh bucks pilot program is established by the
3.3 Department of Health to help Minnesotans participating in SNAP or Summer EBT purchase
3.4 fresh produce from retailers to support a more nutritious diet.

3.5 (b) Under this program, eligible households may use EBT cards at SNAP retailers to
3.6 receive a dollar-for-dollar match on the purchase of produce up to a \$20 match per day per
3.7 eligible household, with a monthly limit of \$80 per eligible household. This program is
3.8 available until the appropriation is expended.

3.9 Subd. 2. Definitions. (a) For purposes of this section, the terms in this subdivision have
3.10 the meanings given.

3.11 (b) "Department" means the Department of Health.

3.12 (c) "Eligible household" means an individual or family that is determined to be a recipient
3.13 of SNAP or Summer EBT.

3.14 (d) "Nonprofit organization" means a nonprofit organization chosen by the department
3.15 to assist with the administration of the fresh bucks pilot program.

3.16 (e) "Produce" means fresh whole or cut fruits and vegetables without added sugars, fats,
3.17 oils, or salt.

3.18 (f) "Program" means the fresh bucks pilot program.

3.19 (g) "SNAP retailer" means grocery stores, small food retailers, gas stations, and other
3.20 entities that have been selected to participate in the program.

3.21 Subd. 3. Program administration. The nonprofit organization, under the review and
3.22 guidance of the department, shall implement the program by:

3.23 (1) developing and issuing program guidelines;

3.24 (2) creating a process for selecting SNAP retailers using the criteria in subdivision 4;

3.25 (3) reviewing and accepting applications for the program;

3.26 (4) establishing monitoring and accountability mechanisms to ensure the funds from the
3.27 program are used to support the purposes of the program;

3.28 (5) establishing a system for reimbursing SNAP retailers in a timely manner, considering
3.29 any specific needs or circumstances of the SNAP retailer based on size or other factors;

4.1 (6) regularly monitoring the balance of the program funds to ensure that no SNAP retailer
4.2 reimbursements combined with any other program-related expenses exceed the amount
4.3 appropriated for the program; and

4.4 (7) establishing additional guidelines to implement the program as the nonprofit
4.5 organization deems reasonable.

4.6 Subd. 4. SNAP retailer selection criteria. (a) To be eligible to participate in the program,
4.7 SNAP retailers must meet the following minimum criteria:

4.8 (1) accept expenditures of benefits provided by SNAP in accordance with United States
4.9 Code, title 7, section 2011, and Summer EBT;

4.10 (2) be in good standing with SNAP and Summer EBT;

4.11 (3) demonstrate the capacity to successfully implement the program;

4.12 (4) commit to begin offering the program to eligible households no later than 90 days
4.13 from the date the retailer receives notice of approval to participate in the program;

4.14 (5) agree to comply with all data collection and reporting requirements established by
4.15 the department or other state agency;

4.16 (6) agree to cooperate with efforts to market the program; and

4.17 (7) agree to cooperate with any audit or investigation to protect against the fraudulent
4.18 use of funds under this section that is conducted by a nonprofit organization, department,
4.19 or other state agency.

4.20 (b) The department and nonprofit organization shall consider the following criteria:

4.21 (1) the geographic diversity of the participating SNAP retailer and its participating stores;

4.22 (2) a demonstrated commitment to carrying locally grown food, when possible; and

4.23 (3) any other criteria that the department or nonprofit organization determines necessary
4.24 and consistent with the purposes of this section.

4.25 Subd. 5. Waiver request. The commissioner of children, youth, and families must
4.26 submit a waiver request to the United States Department of Agriculture seeking approval
4.27 for the inclusion of SNAP retailers in this program so that SNAP and Summer EBT
4.28 participants receive a discount for produce.

4.29 Subd. 6. Report. By, the department, in collaboration with the nonprofit organization
4.30 and any other contracted entity, shall submit a report to the chairs and ranking minority

5.1 members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over health containing the following
5.2 information:

5.3 (1) the number of retailers participating and the retailers' geographic distribution;
5.4 (2) the demographics of the areas and individuals served;
5.5 (3) the costs associated with the program; and
5.6 (4) any other information the department determines useful or relevant to understanding
5.7 the reach and effectiveness of the program.

5.8 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.

5.9 **Sec. 7. APPROPRIATIONS; HEALTHY EATING, HERE AT HOME; FRESH**
5.10 **BUCKS PILOT PROGRAM.**

5.11 (a) \$500,000 in fiscal year 2026 and \$500,000 in fiscal year 2027 are appropriated from
5.12 the general fund to the commissioner of health for the healthy eating, here at home program
5.13 under section 1.

5.14 (b) \$1,000,000 in fiscal year 2026 and \$1,000,000 in fiscal year 2027 are appropriated
5.16 from the general fund to the commissioner of health for the fresh bucks pilot program under
section 6. This is a onetime appropriation and is available until January 1, 2028.

5.17 **Sec. 8. TRANSFER OF PROGRAM.**

5.18 The healthy eating, here at home program is transferred from the Minnesota Humanities
5.19 Center to the Department of Health on July 1, 2025. The provisions of Minnesota Statutes,
5.20 section 15.039, apply to this transfer.

5.21 **Sec. 9. REVISOR INSTRUCTION.**

5.22 The revisor of statutes shall renumber Minnesota Statutes, section 138.912, as section
5.23 144.0554. The revisor shall make any cross-reference changes necessary resulting from the
5.24 renumbering of the healthy eating, here at home program.

5.25 **Sec. 10. REPEALER.**

5.26 Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 138.912, subdivision 7, is repealed.

138.912 HEALTHY EATING, HERE AT HOME.

Subd. 7. Grocery inclusion. The commissioner of children, youth, and families must submit a waiver request to the federal United States Department of Agriculture seeking approval for the inclusion of Minnesota grocery stores in this program so that SNAP participants may use the vouchers for healthy produce at grocery stores. Grocery store participation is voluntary and a grocery store's associated administrative costs will not be reimbursed.