

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1135

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 16, 2021

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1135.

This bill requires the Department of Human Services, in consultation with the Secretary of Higher Education, to develop a plan to increase outreach efforts to students enrolled in institutions of higher education or post-secondary education in the State concerning the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (NJ SNAP), which provides assistance to eligible low-income families and individuals to purchase food. The outreach efforts are to include compiling, preparing, and disseminating information concerning the program's eligibility requirements as they pertain to students, program benefits and application procedures.

The bill also requires that the information be disseminated in a manner that aligns with the services and programs that potentially eligible students are likely to utilize or be enrolled in, including, but not limited to, financial aid, federal- or State-financed work study, campus childcare, employment and training programs that require enrollment in an institution of higher education as a component of the program, employment and training programs for low-income households operated by the State or a local government, and services or programs targeted to students with disabilities, students who are employed, and non-traditional students.

Formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, SNAP benefits are distributed to recipients through EBT cards, and may be used at a network of grocery stores and farmers markets to purchase food. The eligibility requirements for the program are largely set at the federal level and are particularly detailed where it concerns eligibility of college students. It is the sponsor's intent that this bill increase awareness of SNAP among the population of students who may be eligible for SNAP benefits but are unaware of the program's existence or their potential eligibility.

As reported by the committee, Senate Bill No. 1135 is identical to Assembly Bill No. 1003, which was also reported by the committee on this date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that the bill will increase expenditures by the Department of Human Services

(DHS) due to certain one-time costs in developing a plan to increase outreach efforts to certain students regarding the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The OLS is unable to quantify this impact but estimates that expenses incurred under the bill will be insignificant due to low overall cost and the likelihood that any costs may be absorbed by the department's existing operating budget.