

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 27, 2016

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2054

Introduced by Assembly Member Thurmond
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Gonzalez)

February 17, 2016

An act to add Section 10072.2 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to public social services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2054, as amended, Thurmond. Nutrition assistance: Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer for Children.

Existing law establishes the California Health and Human Services Agency. The agency includes various departments that administer social services in this state, including the State Department of Social Services.

Existing federal law provides for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), known in California as CalFresh, under which supplemental nutrition assistance benefits allocated to the state by the federal government are distributed to eligible individuals by each county. Existing state law authorizes a county to deliver CalFresh benefits through the use of an electronic benefits transfer (EBT) system.

This bill would require the California Health and Human Services Agency, in conjunction with any other relevant state agencies, to design and implement the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer for Children (SEBTC) to provide nutrition assistance benefits to eligible households. The bill would require that the system be compatible with the state's electronic benefits transfer system, comply with federal laws and regulations, and comply with privacy and confidentiality procedures consistent with all applicable state and federal law. The bill would

require, among other things, the agency, and any other state agency, as specified, to request or apply for federal approval or authorization necessary to implement and operate SEBTC. The bill would also require each agency to request or apply for all available federal funding to implement and operate SEBTC. The bill would require the Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency to notify in a timely manner the appropriate head of each additional agency that is required to request or apply for federal approval or authorization so as to permit the other agency sufficient time to complete the process. *The bill would provide that the provision of SEBTC benefits to eligible households is contingent upon federal funding for this purpose.* The bill would also include a statement of legislative findings and declarations.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
 State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
- 2 following:
- 3 (a) Across California, two in every five low-income households
- 4 with children cannot consistently afford enough food. In all, 1.7
- 5 million Californians live in these food-insecure households.
- 6 (b) Eighty percent, or 1.8 million, of the children in California
- 7 who benefit from nutritious, free or reduced-price school lunches
- 8 miss out on similar meals during the summer. This summer
- 9 nutrition gap has persisted for over a decade.
- 10 (c) Children need consistent access to nutritious meals in order
- 11 to learn, grow, and achieve at their fullest potential. All children
- 12 deserve to be well nourished.
- 13 (d) Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer for Children,
- 14 hereinafter known as SEBTC, is a well-tested model shown to
- 15 decrease food insecurity among children and adults and improve
- 16 the quality of children’s diets.
- 17 (e) By providing nutrition assistance benefits for the purchase
- 18 of groceries when school is out of session and school meals are
- 19 not available, SEBTC would draw federal dollars into California
- 20 households with ~~school-age~~ *schoolage* children and into the state
- 21 and local economies.

1 (f) As Congress prepares to expand SEBTC, California should
2 seize all opportunities to ensure that the expansion benefits our
3 state.

4 (g) Given California's persistent summer nutrition gap and the
5 positive effects of SEBTC, the state should design a SEBTC system
6 for California and seek all available federal funding and federal
7 authority to operate the system.

8 SEC. 2. Section 10072.2 is added to the Welfare and
9 Institutions Code, to read:

10 10072.2. (a) (1) The California Health and Human Services
11 Agency, in conjunction with any other state agency described in
12 paragraph (2), shall design and implement the Summer Electronic
13 Benefits Transfer for Children (SEBTC) to provide nutrition
14 assistance benefits to eligible households.

15 (2) If federal law requires a state agency other than the
16 California Health and Human Services Agency to obtain federal
17 approval or authorization in order to carry out the requirements of
18 this section, that state agency shall request or apply for the
19 necessary federal approval or authorization. The Secretary of the
20 California Health and Human Services Agency shall notify in a
21 timely manner the appropriate head of each additional agency that
22 is required to request or apply for that approval or authorization
23 so as to permit the other agency sufficient time to complete the
24 process.

25 (b) The system described in subdivision (a) shall be compatible
26 with the state's electronic benefits transfer system pursuant to
27 Section 10072 and comply with any federal laws and regulations
28 governing SEBTC.

29 (c) The system described in subdivision (a) shall comply with
30 privacy and confidentiality procedures consistent with all
31 applicable state and federal law.

32 (d) Each agency identified in subdivision (a) shall do both of
33 the following:

34 (1) Request or apply for federal approval or authorization
35 necessary to implement and operate SEBTC and support the request
36 or application of any other state agency, if necessary.

37 (2) Request or apply for all available federal funding to assist
38 the state in implementing and operating SEBTC and support the
39 request or application of any other state agency, if necessary, to
40 obtain all available federal funds for that purpose.

1 (e) *The provision of SEBTC benefits to eligible households*
2 *pursuant to this section is contingent upon federal funding for this*
3 *purpose.*

4 (e)

5 (f) For purposes of this section, “Summer Electronic Benefits
6 Transfer for Children” or “SEBTC” means a program, pilot, or
7 demonstration project that, during periods when school is out of
8 session, provides nutrition assistance benefits via electronic benefits
9 transfer to households with children who are within the relevant
10 definitions and criteria in federal statutes and regulations that
11 prescribe eligibility for free and ~~reduced-price~~ *reduced-price* meals.