

By: Rodriguez of Travis

H.B. No. 3705

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to establishing a pilot program for the purchase of produce at farmers markets under certain nutritional assistance programs.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 33, Human Resources Code, is amended by adding Section 33.039 to read as follows:

Sec. 33.039. "DOUBLE DOLLARS" PILOT PROGRAM FOR PRODUCE PURCHASED AT FARMERS MARKETS. (a) In this section:

(1) "Farmers market" means a location at which a group of two or more farmers that are certified under the department's farmers market certification program offer produce for retail sale.

(2) "Nutritional assistance program" means the supplemental nutrition assistance program and the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children.

(3) "Produce" means fresh fruits or vegetables.

(b) The executive commissioner by rule shall develop and the department shall implement a pilot program to create a "Double Dollars" program that, to the extent allowed by federal law, provides an increase in the value of nutritional assistance program benefits to a recipient of the benefits who resides in an area included in the pilot program. The pilot program must be operated in one or more areas designated by the executive commissioner as low income areas.

1 (c) The pilot program increases the allowable weekly
2 benefit for the purchase of produce by \$1 for every \$1 used by a
3 recipient to purchase produce at a farmers market, with a total
4 benefit value not to exceed \$20 a week for each nutritional
5 assistance program from which a recipient receives benefits.

6 (d) To implement the pilot program, the department may:

7 (1) seek, accept, and spend funds received through
8 grants or donations from public or private sources; and

9 (2) develop partnerships with persons or public or
10 private entities located in the areas served by the pilot program.

11 (e) This section expires September 1, 2015.

12 SECTION 2. The change in law made by this Act applies only
13 to supplemental nutrition assistance program and special
14 supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children
15 benefits distributed on or after the effective date of this Act.
16 Benefits distributed before the effective date of this Act are
17 governed by the law in effect on the date the distribution was made,
18 and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

19 SECTION 3. If before implementing any provision of this Act
20 a state agency determines that a waiver or authorization from a
21 federal agency is necessary for implementation of that provision,
22 the agency affected by the provision shall request the waiver or
23 authorization and may delay implementing that provision until the
24 waiver or authorization is granted.

25 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2013.