

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
87R19312 MM-F

C.S.S.B. 1914  
By: Blanco  
Health & Human Services  
5/6/2021  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Under federal law, households must meet certain income and resource limits to be eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) gives states the option of determining how vehicles count toward household resources. Current Texas law allows a maximum value of only \$15,000 for the first vehicle and \$4,650 for the second or any additional vehicles to qualify for SNAP benefits.

Current Texas vehicle value policy disqualifies many households from accessing SNAP—especially families with two working parents who depend on two reliable vehicles to find and maintain employment. Additionally, the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic left millions of Texans struggling to pay their bills and feed their families. Many people lost their jobs and thousands of families were unable to access SNAP because they owned cars above the vehicle asset limits.

S.B. 1914 requires that the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) annually adjust the maximum amount of fair market value of a household's vehicles that is excluded from consideration from the SNAP assets test to account for inflation.

C.S.S.B. 1914 amends current law relating to annually adjusting for inflation the maximum amount of a motor vehicle excluded in determining eligibility for the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission in SECTION 1 (Section 33.0215, Human Resources Code) of this bill.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 33, Human Resources Code, by adding Section 33.0215, as follows:

Sec. 33.0215. ANNUAL INFLATION ADJUSTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLE VALUE EXCLUDED IN DETERMINING SNAP ELIGIBILITY. (a) Requires the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission by rule to adjust for inflation in the manner specified by Subsection (b) the maximum amount of the fair market value of a motor vehicle that may be excluded from the resources of an applicant's household for purposes of determining the applicant's eligibility for supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, including eligibility determined in accordance with 7 C.F.R. Section 273.2(j).

(b) Requires that, not later than October 1 of each year, the maximum amount of the fair market value of a motor vehicle described by Subsection (a) that may be excluded from an applicant's resources be increased or decreased to reflect the percentage difference between:

(1) the average index level set by the Bureau of Labor Statistics; and

(2) the new vehicles index of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics or its successor index during the most recent 12-month period ending in June.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 3. Requires a state agency, if necessary for implementation of a provision of this Act, to request a waiver or authorization from a federal agency, and authorizes a delay of implementation until such a waiver or authorization is granted.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2021.