

Appendix A Legal Authority

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FOOD AND NUTRITION ACT OF 2008

[Public Law 88–525; Enacted Aug. 31, 1964; 78 Stat. 703]

[As Amended Through P.L. 116–94, Enacted December 20, 2019]

[Currency: This publication is a compilation of the text of Public Law 88–525. It was last amended by the public law listed in the As Amended Through note above and below at the bottom of each page of the pdf version and reflects current law through the date of the enactment of the public law listed at <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/comps/>]

[Note: While this publication does not represent an official version of any Federal statute, substantial efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of its contents. The official version of Federal law is found in the United States Statutes at Large and in the United States Code. The legal effect to be given to the Statutes at Large and the United States Code is established by statute (1 U.S.C. 112, 204).]

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¹This table of contents is not part of the Act but is included for user convenience. The numbers in brackets refer to section numbers in title 7, United States Code.

RESEARCH, DEMONSTRATION, AND EVALUATIONS

SEC. 17. [7 U.S.C. 2026] (a)(1) The Secretary may enter into contracts with or make grants to public or private organizations or agencies under this section to undertake research that will help improve the administration and effectiveness of the supplemental nutrition assistance program in delivering nutrition-related benefits. The waiver authority of the Secretary under subsection (b) shall extend to all contracts and grants under this section.

(2) The Secretary may, on application, permit not more than two State agencies to establish procedures that allow households whose monthly supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits do not exceed \$20, at their option, to receive, in lieu of their supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits for the initial period under section 8 and their regular allotment in following months, and at intervals of up to 3 months thereafter, aggregate allotments not to exceed \$60 and covering not more than 3 months' benefits. The allotments shall be provided in accordance with paragraphs (3) and (9) of section 11(e) (except that no household shall begin to receive combined allotments under this section until it has complied with all applicable verification requirements of section 11(e)(3)) and (with respect to the first aggregate allotment so issued) within 40 days of the last benefit issuance.

(b)(1)(A) The Secretary may conduct on a trial basis, in one or more areas of the United States, pilot or experimental projects designed to test program changes that might increase the efficiency of the supplemental nutrition assistance program and improve the delivery of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits to

eligible households, and may waive any requirement of this Act to the extent necessary for the project to be conducted.

(B) PROJECT REQUIREMENTS.—

(i) PROGRAM GOAL.—The Secretary may not conduct a project under subparagraph (A) unless—

(I) the project is consistent with the goal of the supplemental nutrition assistance program of providing food assistance to raise levels of nutrition among low-income individuals; and

(II) the project includes an evaluation to determine the effects of the project.

(ii) PERMISSIBLE PROJECTS.—The Secretary may conduct a project under subparagraph (A) to—

(I) improve program administration;

(II) increase the self-sufficiency of supplemental nutrition assistance program recipients;

(III) test innovative welfare reform strategies;

or

(IV) allow greater conformity with the rules of other programs than would be allowed but for this paragraph.

(iii) RESTRICTIONS ON PERMISSIBLE PROJECTS.—If the Secretary finds that a project under subparagraph (A) would reduce benefits by more than 20 percent for more than 5 percent of households in the area subject to the project (not including any household whose benefits are reduced due to a failure to comply with work or other conduct requirements), the project—

(I) may not include more than 15 percent of the number of households in the State receiving supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits; and

(II) shall continue for not more than 5 years after the date of implementation, unless the Secretary approves an extension requested by the State agency at any time.

(iv) IMPERMISSIBLE PROJECTS.—The Secretary may not conduct a project under subparagraph (A) that—

(I) involves the payment of the value of an allotment in the form of cash or otherwise providing benefits in a form not restricted to the purchase of food, unless the project was approved prior to the date of enactment of this subparagraph [August 22, 1996];

(II) has the effect of substantially transferring funds made available under this Act to services or benefits provided primarily through another public assistance program, or using the funds for any purpose other than the purchase of food, program administration, or an employment or training program;

(III) is inconsistent with—

(aa) paragraphs (4) and (5) of section 3(m);

- (bb) the last sentence of section 5(a), insofar as a waiver denies assistance to an otherwise eligible household or individual if the household or individual has not failed to comply with any work, behavioral, or other conduct requirement under this or another program;
- (cc) section 5(c)(2);
- (dd) paragraph (2)(B), (4)(F)(i), or (4)(K) of section 6(d);
- (ee) section 8(b);
- (ff) section 11(e)(2)(B);
- (gg) the time standard under section 11(e)(3);
- (hh) subsection (a), (c), (g), (h)(1)(F), (h)(2), or (h)(3) of section 16;
- (ii) this paragraph; or
- (jj) subsection (a)(1) or (g)(1) of section 20;
- (IV) modifies the operation of section 5 so as to have the effect of—
- (aa) increasing the shelter deduction to households with no out-of-pocket housing costs or housing costs that consume a low percentage of the household's income; or
- (bb) absolving a State from acting with reasonable promptness on substantial reported changes in income or household size (except that this subclause shall not apply with regard to changes related to supplemental nutrition assistance program deductions);
- (V) is not limited to a specific time period;
- (VI) waives a provision of section 26; or
- (VII) waives a provision of section 7(i).
- (v) **ADDITIONAL INCLUDED PROJECTS.**—A pilot or experimental project may include projects involving the payment of the value of allotments or the average value of allotments by household size in the form of cash to eligible households all of whose members are age sixty-five or over or any of whose members are entitled to supplemental security income benefits under title XVI of the Social Security Act [(42 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.)] or are receiving assistance under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), the use of identification mechanisms that do not invade a household's privacy, and the use of food checks or other voucher-type forms in place of EBT cards.
- (vi) **CASH PAYMENT PILOT PROJECTS.**—Subject to the availability of appropriations under section 18(a), any pilot or experimental project implemented under this paragraph and operating as of October 1, 1981, involving the payment of the value of allotments in the form of cash to eligible households all of whose

members are either age sixty-five or over or entitled to supplemental security income benefits under title XVI of the Social Security Act [(42 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.)] shall be continued if the State so requests.

(C)(i) No waiver or demonstration program shall be approved under this Act after the date of enactment of this subparagraph unless—

(I) any household whose food assistance is issued in a form other than EBT cards has its allotment increased to the extent necessary to compensate for any State or local sales tax that may be collected in all or part of the area covered by the demonstration project, the tax on purchases of food by any such household is waived, or the Secretary determines on the basis of information provided by the State agency that the increase is unnecessary on the basis of the limited nature of the items subject to the State or local sales tax; and

(II) the State agency conducting the demonstration project pays the cost of any increased allotments.

(ii) Clause (i) shall not apply if a waiver or demonstration project already provides a household with assistance that exceeds that which the household would otherwise be eligible to receive by more than the estimated amount of any sales tax on the purchases of food that would be collected from the household in the project area in which the household resides.

(D) RESPONSE TO WAIVERS.—

(i) RESPONSE.—Not later than 60 days after the date of receiving a request for a waiver under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall provide a response that—

(I) approves the waiver request;

(II) denies the waiver request and describes any modification needed for approval of the waiver request;

(III) denies the waiver request and describes the grounds for the denial; or

(IV) requests clarification of the waiver request.

(ii) FAILURE TO RESPOND.—If the Secretary does not provide a response in accordance with clause (i), the waiver shall be considered approved, unless the approval is specifically prohibited by this Act.

(iii) NOTICE OF DENIAL.—On denial of a waiver request under clause (i)(III), the Secretary shall provide a copy of the waiver request and a description of the reasons for the denial to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

(2)(A) The Secretary may conduct demonstration projects to test improved consistency or coordination between the supplemental nutrition assistance program employment and training program and the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills program under title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.).

(B) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the Secretary may, as part of a project authorized under this paragraph, waive requirements

under section 6(d) to permit a State to operate an employment and training program for supplemental nutrition assistance program recipients on the same terms and conditions under which the State operates its Job Opportunities and Basic Skills program for recipients of aid to families with dependent children under part F of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 681 et seq.). Any work experience program conducted as part of the project shall be conducted in conformity with section 482(f) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 682(f)).

(C) A State seeking such a waiver shall provide assurances that the resulting employment and training program shall meet the requirements of subsections (a)(19) and (g) of section 402 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 602) (but not including the provision of transitional benefits under clauses (ii) through (vii) of section 402(g)(1)(A)) and sections 481 through 487 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 681 through 687). Each reference to “aid to families with dependent children” in such sections shall be deemed to be a reference to supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits for purposes of the demonstration project.

(D) Notwithstanding the other provisions of this paragraph, participation in an employment and training activity in which supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits are converted to cash shall occur only with the consent of the participant.

(E) For the purposes of any project conducted under this paragraph, the provisions of this Act affecting the rights of recipients may be waived to the extent necessary to conform to the provisions of section 402, and sections 481 through 487, of the Social Security Act.

(F) At least 60 days prior to granting final approval of a project under this paragraph, the Secretary shall publish the terms and conditions for any demonstration project conducted under the paragraph for public comment in the Federal Register and shall notify the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

(G) Waivers may be granted under this paragraph to conduct projects at any one time in a total of up to 60 project areas (or parts of project areas), as such areas are defined in regulations in effect on January 1, 1990.

(H) A waiver for a change in program rules may be granted under this paragraph only for a demonstration project that has been approved by the Secretary, that will be evaluated according to criteria prescribed by the Secretary, and that will be in operation for no more than 4 years.

(I) The Secretary may not grant a waiver under this paragraph on or after the date of enactment of this subparagraph [Aug. 22, 1996]. Any reference in this paragraph to a provision of title IV of the Social Security Act shall be deemed to be a reference to such provision as in effect on the day before such date.

(c) The Secretary shall develop and implement measures for evaluating, on an annual or more frequent basis, the effectiveness of the supplemental nutrition assistance program in achieving its stated objectives, including, but not limited to, the program’s impact upon the nutritional and economic status of participating

households, the program's impact upon all sectors of the agricultural economy, including farmers and ranchers, as well as retail food stores, and the program's relative fairness to households of different income levels, different age composition, different size, and different regions of residence. Further, the Secretary shall, by way of making contracts with or grants to public or private organizations or agencies, implement pilot programs to test various means of measuring on a continuing basis the nutritional status of low income people, with special emphasis on people who are eligible for supplemental nutrition assistance, in order to develop minimum common criteria and methods for systematic nutrition monitoring that could be applied on a nationwide basis. The locations of the pilot programs shall be selected to provide a representative geographic and demographic cross-section of political subdivisions that reflect natural usage patterns of health and nutritional services and that contain high proportions of low income people. The Secretary shall report on the progress of these pilot programs on an annual basis commencing on July 1, 1982, to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate, together with such recommendations as the Secretary deems appropriate.

(d) EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES PROGRAM.—

(1) ELECTION TO PARTICIPATE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the other provisions of this subsection, a State may elect to carry out an employment initiatives program under this subsection.

(B) REQUIREMENT.—A State shall be eligible to carry out an employment initiatives program under this subsection only if not less than 50 percent of the households in the State that received supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits during the summer of 1993 also received benefits under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) during the summer of 1993.

(2) PROCEDURE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A State that has elected to carry out an employment initiatives program under paragraph (1) may use amounts equal to the allotments that would otherwise be issued to a household under the supplemental nutrition assistance program, but for the operation of this subsection, to provide cash benefits in lieu of the allotments to the household if the household is eligible under paragraph (3).

(B) PAYMENT.—The Secretary shall pay to each State that has elected to carry out an employment initiatives program under paragraph (1) an amount equal to the value of the allotment that each household participating in the program in the State would be eligible to receive under this Act but for the operation of this subsection.

(C) OTHER PROVISIONS.—For purposes of the supplemental nutrition assistance program (other than this subsection)—

(i) cash assistance under this subsection shall be considered to be an allotment; and

(ii) each household receiving cash benefits under this subsection shall not receive any other supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits during the period for which the cash assistance is provided.

(D) **ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS.**—Each State that has elected to carry out an employment initiatives program under paragraph (1) shall—

(i) increase the cash benefits provided to each household participating in the program in the State under this subsection to compensate for any State or local sales tax that may be collected on purchases of food by the household, unless the Secretary determines on the basis of information provided by the State that the increase is unnecessary on the basis of the limited nature of the items subject to the State or local sales tax; and

(ii) pay the cost of any increase in cash benefits required by clause (i).

(3) **ELIGIBILITY.**—A household shall be eligible to receive cash benefits under paragraph (2) if an adult member of the household—

(A) has worked in unsubsidized employment for not less than the preceding 90 days;

(B) has earned not less than \$350 per month from the employment referred to in subparagraph (A) for not less than the preceding 90 days;

(C)(i) is receiving benefits under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.); or

(ii) was receiving benefits under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) at the time the member first received cash benefits under this subsection and is no longer eligible for the State program because of earned income;

(D) is continuing to earn not less than \$350 per month from the employment referred to in subparagraph (A); and

(E) elects to receive cash benefits in lieu of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits under this subsection.

(4) **EVALUATION.**—A State that operates a program under this subsection for 2 years shall provide to the Secretary a written evaluation of the impact of cash assistance under this subsection. The State agency, with the concurrence of the Secretary, shall determine the content of the evaluation.

(e) The Secretary shall conduct a study of the effects of reductions made in benefits provided under this Act pursuant to part 1 of subtitle A of title I of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, the Food Stamp and Commodity Distribution Amendments of 1981, the Food Stamp Act Amendments of 1982, and any other laws enacted by the Ninety-seventh Congress which affect the supplemental nutrition assistance program. The study shall include a study of the effect of retrospective accounting and periodic reporting procedures established under such Acts, including the impact on benefit and administrative costs and on error rates and the de-

gree to which eligible households are denied supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits for failure to file complete periodic reports. The Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate an interim report on the results of such study no later than February 1, 1984, and a final report on the results of such study no later than March 1, 1985.

(f) In order to encourage States to plan, design, develop, and implement a system for making supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits available through the use of intelligent benefit cards or other automated or electronic benefit delivery systems, the Secretary may conduct one or more pilot or experimental projects, subject to the restrictions imposed by subsection (b)(1) and section 7(f)(2), designed to test whether the use of such cards or systems can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of program operations while ensuring that individuals receive correct benefit amounts on a timely basis. Intelligent benefit cards developed under such a demonstration project shall contain information, encoded on a computer chip embedded in a credit card medium, including the eligibility of the individual and the amount of benefits to which such individual is entitled. Any other automated or electronic benefit delivery system developed under such a demonstration project shall be able to use a plastic card to access such information from a data file.

(g) In order to assess the effectiveness of the employment and training programs established under section 6(d) in placing individuals into the work force and withdrawing such individuals from the supplemental nutrition assistance program, the Secretary is authorized to carry out studies comparing the pre- and post-program labor force participation, wage rates, family income, level of receipt of supplemental nutrition assistance program and other transfer payments, and other relevant information, for samples of participants in such employment and training programs as compared to the appropriate control or comparison groups that did not participate in such programs. Such studies shall, to the maximum extent possible—

(1) collect such data for up to 3 years after the individual has completed the employment and training program; and

(2) yield results that can be generalized to the national program as a whole.

The results of such studies and reports shall be considered in developing or updating the performance standards required under section 6.

(h) The Secretary shall conduct a sufficient number of demonstration projects to evaluate the effects, in both rural and urban areas, of including in financial resources under section 5(g) the fair market value of licensed vehicles to the extent the value of each vehicle exceeds \$4,500, but excluding the value of—

(1) any licensed vehicle that is used to produce earned income, necessary for transportation of an elderly or physically disabled household member, or used as the household's home; and

(2) one licensed vehicle used to obtain, continue, or seek employment (including travel to and from work), used to pursue employment-related education or training, or used to secure food or the benefits of the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

(i) The Secretary shall conduct, under such terms and conditions as the Secretary shall prescribe, for a period not to exceed 4 years, projects to test allowing not more than 11,000 eligible households, in the aggregate, to accumulate resources up to \$10,000 each (which shall be excluded from consideration as a resource) for later expenditure for a purpose directly related to improving the education, training, or employability (including self-employment) of household members, for the purchase of a home for the household, for a change of the household's residence, or for making major repairs to the household's home.

(j) The Secretary shall use up to \$4,000,000 of the funds provided in advance in appropriations Acts for projects authorized by this section to conduct demonstration projects in which State or local supplemental nutrition assistance program agencies test innovative ideas for working with State or local law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute benefit trafficking.

(k) PILOT PROJECTS TO EVALUATE HEALTH AND NUTRITION PROMOTION IN THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out, under such terms and conditions as the Secretary considers to be appropriate, pilot projects to develop and test methods—

(A) of using the supplemental nutrition assistance program to improve the dietary and health status of households eligible for or participating in the supplemental nutrition assistance program; and

(B) to reduce overweight, obesity (including childhood obesity), and associated co-morbidities in the United States.

(2) GRANTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary may enter into competitively awarded contracts or cooperative agreements with, or provide grants to, public or private organizations or agencies (as defined by the Secretary), for use in accordance with projects that meet the strategy goals of this subsection.

(B) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a contract, cooperative agreement, or grant under this paragraph, an organization shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(C) SELECTION CRITERIA.—Pilot projects shall be evaluated against publicly disseminated criteria that may include—

(i) identification of a low-income target audience that corresponds to individuals living in households with incomes at or below 185 percent of the poverty level;

(ii) incorporation of a scientifically based strategy that is designed to improve diet quality through more healthful food purchases, preparation, or consumption;

(iii) a commitment to a pilot project that allows for a rigorous outcome evaluation, including data collection;

(iv) strategies to improve the nutritional value of food served during school hours and during after-school hours;

(v) innovative ways to provide significant improvement to the health and wellness of children;

(vi) other criteria, as determined by the Secretary.

(D) USE OF FUNDS.—Funds provided under this paragraph shall not be used for any project that limits the use of benefits under this Act.

(3) PROJECTS.—Pilot projects carried out under paragraph (1) may include projects to determine whether healthier food purchases by and healthier diets among households participating in the supplemental nutrition assistance program result from projects that—

(A) increase the supplemental nutrition assistance purchasing power of the participating households by providing increased supplemental nutrition assistance program benefit allotments to the participating households;

(B) increase access to farmers markets by participating households through the electronic redemption of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits at farmers' markets;

(C) provide incentives to authorized supplemental nutrition assistance program retailers to increase the availability of healthy foods to participating households;

(D) subject authorized supplemental nutrition assistance program retailers to stricter retailer requirements with respect to carrying and stocking healthful foods;

(E) provide incentives at the point of purchase to encourage households participating in the supplemental nutrition assistance program to purchase fruits, vegetables, or other healthful foods; or

(F) provide to participating households integrated communication and education programs, including the provision of funding for a portion of a school-based nutrition coordinator to implement a broad nutrition action plan and parent nutrition education programs in elementary schools, separately or in combination with pilot projects carried out under subparagraphs (A) through (E).

(4) EVALUATION AND REPORTING.—

(A) EVALUATION.—

(i) INDEPENDENT EVALUATION.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide for an independent evaluation of projects selected under this subsection that measures the impact of the pilot program on health and nutrition as described in paragraph (1).

(II) REQUIREMENT.—The independent evaluation under subclause (I) shall use rigorous methodologies, particularly random assignment or other methods that are capable of producing scientifically valid information regarding which activities are effective.

(ii) COSTS.—The Secretary may use funds provided to carry out this section to pay costs associated with monitoring and evaluating each pilot project.

(B) REPORTING.—Not later than 90 days after the last day of fiscal year 2009 and each fiscal year thereafter until the completion of the last evaluation under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that includes a description of—

- (i) the status of each pilot project;
- (ii) the results of the evaluation completed during the previous fiscal year; and
- (iii) to the maximum extent practicable—

(I) the impact of the pilot project on appropriate health, nutrition, and associated behavioral outcomes among households participating in the pilot project;

(II) baseline information relevant to the stated goals and desired outcomes of the pilot project; and

(III) equivalent information about similar or identical measures among control or comparison groups that did not participate in the pilot project.

(C) PUBLIC DISSEMINATION.—In addition to the reporting requirements under subparagraph (B), evaluation results shall be shared broadly to inform policy makers, service providers, other partners, and the public in order to promote wide use of successful strategies.

(5) FUNDING.—

(A) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this section for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012.

(B) MANDATORY FUNDING.—Out of any funds made available under section 18, on October 1, 2008, the Secretary shall make available \$20,000,000 to carry out a project described in paragraph (3)(E), to remain available until expended.

(I) COOPERATION WITH PROGRAM RESEARCH AND EVALUATION.—Subject to the requirements of this Act, including protections under section 11(e)(8), States, State agencies, local agencies, institutions, facilities such as data consortiums, and contractors participating in programs authorized under this Act shall—

- (1) cooperate with officials and contractors acting on behalf of the Secretary in the conduct of evaluations and studies under this Act; and

(2) submit information at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may require.

(m) EVALUATION OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT COOPERATION REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall conduct an independent evaluation of a representative sample of States—

(A) to assess the implementation and impact of the eligibility requirements described in subsections (l) through (n) of section 6 in States that have formerly implemented or continue to implement those requirements, and the feasibility of implementing those requirements in other States;

(B) to assess the factors that contributed to the decision of States that formerly implemented the eligibility requirements described in each of subsections (l) through (n) of section 6 to cease such implementation;

(C) to review alternatives to the eligibility requirements described in each of subsections (l) through (n) of section 6 that are used by other States to assist participants in the supplemental nutrition assistance program to make or receive child support payments and the effectiveness of those alternatives; and

(D) to evaluate the costs and benefits to households and to State agencies, of requiring State agencies to implement each of the eligibility requirements described in subsections (l) through (n) of section 6.

(2) EVALUATION.—The evaluation under paragraph (1) shall include, to the maximum extent practicable, an assessment of—

(A) the manner in which applicable State agencies implement and enforce the eligibility requirements described in subparagraph (A) of such paragraph, including—

(i) the procedures used by each State to determine cooperation, to sanction participants for failure to cooperate, and to determine good cause for noncooperation under each of subsections (l) through (n) of section 6; and

(ii) the manner in which each State aligns the procedures for implementing those eligibility requirements with procedures for implementing other Federal programs that require cooperation with child support enforcement, including the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families established under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), the Medicaid program under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.), and programs carried out under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9857 et seq.);

(B) the Federal, State, and local costs associated with implementing those eligibility requirements, including costs incurred under this Act and by child support enforce-

ment agencies for personnel, technology upgrades, and other costs;

(C) the effect of those eligibility requirements on the establishment of new child support orders, the establishment of paternity, changes in child support payments to custodial households, and changes in arrears owed on child support orders;

(D) with respect to the eligibility requirements under each of subsections (l) through (n) of section 6—

(i) the number of individuals subject to those requirements;

(ii) the number of individuals in each State who meet those requirements; and

(iii) the number of individuals in each State who fail to meet those requirements;

(E) the number of individuals in each State for whom good cause for noncooperation has been found under section 6(l)(2);

(F) the impact of those eligibility requirements on the supplemental nutrition assistance program eligibility, benefit levels, food security, income, and economic stability of—

(i) individuals subject to those requirements;

(ii) the household members of those individuals, including children; and

(iii) households with nontraditional family structures, including a household in which a grandparent is the primary caretaker of a grandchild of the grandparent.

(3) STATE AGENCY COOPERATION.—Each State agency selected under paragraph (1) shall provide information to the Secretary necessary to conduct the evaluation under such paragraph.

(4) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report describing the findings from the evaluation conducted under paragraph (1).

(n) LONGITUDINAL DATA FOR RESEARCH.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraphs (3) through (5), a State agency may, on approval by the Secretary, establish a longitudinal database that contains information about households and members of households that receive benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program in the State.

(2) PURPOSE.—Each longitudinal database established under paragraph (1) shall be used solely to conduct research on participation in and the operation of the supplemental nutrition assistance program, including duration of participation in the program.

(3) REQUIREMENTS FOR DATABASES.—Prior to the approval of State agencies to establish longitudinal databases under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

(A) identify features that shall be standard across States such as database format to facilitate use of longitudinal databases established under paragraph (1) for research purposes;

(B) identify features of longitudinal databases established under paragraph (1) that may vary across States;

(C) identify a procedure for States operating longitudinal databases under paragraph (1) to use a unique identifier to provide relevant information on household members who receive benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program for the purpose of comparing participation data in multiple participating States over time while protecting participant privacy;

(D) establish the manner in which data security and privacy protections, as required by Federal law and consistent with other appropriate practices, shall be implemented and maintained;

(E) provide direction to State agencies on the responsibilities of and funding arrangements for State agencies and any State contractors (including entities providing technical assistance) relating to the establishment and operation of a longitudinal database;

(F) provide a description of the documentation that States shall submit to the Secretary prior to allowing researchers access to a longitudinal database;

(G) consult with other Federal research agencies, including the Bureau of the Census;

(H) consult with States that have already established databases used for purposes similar to the purposes outlined in this subsection; and

(I) identify any other requirements determined appropriate by the Secretary.

(4) INCLUDED DATA.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), each longitudinal database established under paragraph (1)—

(i) shall include monthly information about households and members of households that receive benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program in the participating State taken from existing information collected by the State agency including, if available,—

(I) demographic characteristics;

(II) income and financial resources (as described in section 5(g));

(III) employment status;

(IV) household circumstances, such as deductible expenses; and

(V) the amount of the monthly allotment received under the supplemental nutrition assistance program; and

(ii) may include information from other State data sources such as—

(I) earnings and employment data from the State department of labor;

(II) health insurance program data; or

(III) data from participation in other programs administered by the State.

(B) DATA PROTECTION.—Any State that establishes a longitudinal database under paragraph (1) shall, in accordance with all applicable Federal and State privacy standards and requirements—

(i) protect the privacy of information about each member of each household that receives benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program in such State by ensuring that no personally identifiable information (including social security number, home address, or contact information) is included in the longitudinal database; and

(ii) make the data under this paragraph available to researchers and the Secretary.

(5) APPROVAL.—The Secretary shall approve the establishment of longitudinal databases under paragraph (1) in States that—

(A) meet the requirements for databases under paragraph (3) and (4)(B);

(B) reflect a range of participant numbers, demographics, operational structures, and geographic regions; and

(C) have the capacity to provide on a periodic and ongoing basis household and participant data derived from the eligibility system and other data sources of the State.

(6) GRANTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary may provide grants to States that have been approved by the Secretary in accordance with paragraph (5) out of funds made available under paragraph (9).

(B) METHOD OF AWARDING GRANTS.—Grants awarded under this paragraph shall be made in such amounts and under such terms and conditions as the Secretary determines necessary to carry out the purposes of this subsection.

(7) REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 4 years after the effective date of this subsection, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report on the feasibility of expanding implementation of longitudinal databases to every State.

(B) CONTENTS.—The report required under subparagraph (A) shall describe—

(i) the cost of expanding implementation of longitudinal databases with consistent data to every State;

(ii) the challenges and benefits of using State longitudinal databases with consistent data; and

(iii) alternatives to expanding implementation of longitudinal databases with consistent data to every State that may achieve similar research outcomes and

the advantages and disadvantages of those alternatives.

(8) EFFECT.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent or limit the ability of State agencies to establish or continue operating databases used for purposes similar to the purposes outlined in this subsection.

(9) FUNDING.—Of the funds made available under section 18, the Secretary shall use to carry out this subsection—

(A) \$20,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 to remain available through fiscal year 2021; and

(B) \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 2022 and each fiscal year thereafter.

AUTHORIZATION FOR APPROPRIATIONS

SEC. 18. [7 U.S.C. 2027] (a)(1) To carry out this Act, there are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2023. Not to exceed one-fourth of 1 per centum of the previous year's appropriation is authorized in each such fiscal year to carry out the provisions of section 17 of this Act, subject to paragraph (3).

(2) No funds authorized to be appropriated under this Act or any other Act of Congress shall be used by any person, firm, corporation, group, or organization at any time, directly or indirectly, to interfere with or impede the implementation of any provision of this Act or any rule, regulation, or project thereunder, except that this limitation shall not apply to the provision of legal and related assistance in connection with any proceeding or action before any State or Federal agency or court. The President shall ensure that this paragraph is complied with by such order or other means as the President deems appropriate.

(3)(A) Of the amounts made available under the second sentence of paragraph (1), not more than \$2,000,000 in any fiscal year may be used by the Secretary to make 2-year competitive grants that will—

(i) enhance interagency cooperation in nutrition education activities; and

(ii) develop cost effective ways to inform people eligible for supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits about nutrition, resource management, and community nutrition education programs, such as the expanded food and nutrition education program.

(B) The Secretary shall make awards under this paragraph to one or more State cooperative extension services (as defined in section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)) who shall administer the grants in coordination with other State or local agencies serving low-income people.

(C) Each project shall include an evaluation component and shall develop an implementation plan for replication in other States.

(D) The Secretary shall report to the appropriate committees of Congress on the results of the projects and shall disseminate the results through the cooperative extension service system and to State human services and health department offices, local supple-

mental nutrition assistance program offices, and other entities serving low-income households.

(b) In any fiscal year, the Secretary shall limit the value of those allotments issued to an amount not in excess of the appropriation for such fiscal year. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, if in any fiscal year the Secretary finds that the requirements of participating States will exceed the appropriation, the Secretary shall direct State agencies to reduce the value of such allotments to be issued to households certified as eligible to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program to the extent necessary to comply with the provisions of this subsection.

(c) In prescribing the manner in which allotments will be reduced under subsection (b) of this section, the Secretary shall ensure that such reductions reflect, to the maximum extent practicable, the ratio of household income, determined under sections 5(d) and 5(e) of this Act, to the income standards of eligibility, for households of equal size, determined under section 5(c) of this Act. The Secretary may, in prescribing the manner in which allotments will be reduced, establish (1) special provisions applicable to persons sixty years of age or over and persons who are physically or mentally handicapped or otherwise disabled, and (2) minimum allotments after any reductions are otherwise determined under this section.

(d) Not later than sixty days after the issuance of a report under subsection (a) of this section in which the Secretary expresses the belief that reductions in the value of allotments to be issued to households certified to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program will be necessary, the Secretary shall take the requisite action to reduce allotments in accordance with the requirements of this section. Not later than seven days after the Secretary takes any action to reduce allotments under this section, the Secretary shall furnish the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a statement setting forth (1) the basis of the Secretary's determination, (2) the manner in which the allotments will be reduced, and (3) the action that has been taken by the Secretary to reduce the allotments.

(e) Funds collected from claims against households or State agencies, including claims collected pursuant to section 7(f), subsections (g) and (h) of section 11, subsections (b) and (c) of section 13, and section 16(c)(1), claims resulting from resolution of audit findings, and claims collected from households receiving overissuances, shall be credited to the supplemental nutrition assistance program appropriation account for the fiscal year in which the collection occurs. Funds provided to State agencies under section 16(c) of this Act shall be paid from the appropriation account for the fiscal year in which the funds are provided.

(f) No funds appropriated to carry out this Act may be transferred to the Office of the Inspector General, or the Office of the General Counsel, of the Department of Agriculture.

(g) BAN ON RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION ACTIVITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), no funds authorized to be appropriated under this Act shall be used by the Secretary for—

(A) recruitment activities designed to persuade an individual to apply for supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits;

(B) television, radio, or billboard advertisements that are designed to promote supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits and enrollment; or

(C) any agreements with foreign governments designed to promote supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits and enrollment.

(2) LIMITATION.—Paragraph (1)(B) shall not apply to programmatic activities undertaken with respect to benefits made under section 5(h).

(h) BAN ON RECRUITMENT BY ENTITIES THAT RECEIVE FUNDS.—The Secretary shall issue regulations that prohibit entities that receive funds under this Act to compensate any person for conducting outreach activities relating to participation in, or for recruiting individuals to apply to receive benefits under, the supplemental nutrition assistance program, if the amount of the compensation would be based on the number of individuals who apply to receive the benefits.

SEC. 19. [7 U.S.C. 2028] CONSOLIDATED BLOCK GRANTS FOR PUERTO RICO AND AMERICAN SAMOA.

(a) PAYMENTS TO GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES.—

(1) DEFINITION OF GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY.—In this subsection, the term “governmental entity” means—

- (A) the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; and
- (B) American Samoa.

(2) BLOCK GRANTS.—

(A) AMOUNT OF BLOCK GRANTS.—From the sums appropriated under this Act, the Secretary shall, subject to this section, pay to governmental entities to pay the expenditures for nutrition assistance programs for needy persons as described in subparagraphs (B) and (C)—

(i) for fiscal year 2003, \$1,401,000,000; and

(ii) subject to the availability of appropriations under section 18(a), for each fiscal year thereafter, the amount specified in clause (i), as adjusted by the percentage by which the thrifty food plan has been adjusted under section 3(u)(4) between June 30, 2002, and June 30 of the immediately preceding fiscal year.

(B) PAYMENTS TO COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—For fiscal year 2003 and each fiscal year thereafter, the Secretary shall use 99.6 percent of the funds made available under subparagraph (A) for payment to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to pay—

(I) 100 percent of the expenditures by the Commonwealth for the fiscal year for the provision of nutrition assistance included in the plan of the Commonwealth approved under subsection (b); and

(II) 50 percent of the related administrative expenses.

(ii) EXCEPTION FOR EXPENDITURES FOR CERTAIN SYSTEMS.—Notwithstanding clause (i), the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico may spend in fiscal year 2002 or 2003 not more than \$6,000,000 of the amount required to be paid to the Commonwealth for fiscal year 2002 under this paragraph (as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this clause) to pay 100 percent of the costs of—

(I) upgrading and modernizing the electronic data processing system used to carry out nutrition assistance programs for needy persons;

(II) implementing systems to simplify the determination of eligibility to receive the nutrition assistance; and

(III) operating systems to deliver the nutrition assistance through electronic benefit transfers.

(C) PAYMENTS TO AMERICAN SAMOA.—For fiscal year 2003 and each fiscal year thereafter, the Secretary shall use 0.4 percent of the funds made available under subparagraph (A) for payment to American Samoa to pay 100 percent of the expenditures by American Samoa for a nutrition assistance program extended under section 601(c) of Public Law 96–597 (48 U.S.C. 1469d(c)).

(D) CARRYOVER OF FUNDS.—For fiscal year 2002 and each fiscal year thereafter, not more than 2 percent of the funds made available under this paragraph for the fiscal year to each governmental entity may be carried over to the following fiscal year.

(3) TIME AND MANNER OF PAYMENTS TO COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO.—The Secretary shall, subject to the provisions of subsection (b), pay to the Commonwealth for the applicable fiscal year, at such times and in such manner as the Secretary may determine, the amount estimated by the Commonwealth pursuant to subsection (b)(1)(A)(iv), reduced or increased to the extent of any prior overpayment or current underpayment which the Secretary determines has been made under this section and with respect to which adjustment has not already been made under this subsection.

(b)(1)(A) In order to receive payments under this Act for any fiscal year, the Commonwealth shall have a plan for that fiscal year approved by the Secretary under this section. By July 1 of each year, if the Commonwealth wishes to receive payments, it shall submit a plan for the provision of the assistance described in subsection (a)(2)(B) for the following fiscal year which—

(i) designates the agency or agencies directly responsible for the administration, or supervision of the administration, of the program for the provision of such assistance;

(ii) assesses the food and nutrition needs of needy persons residing in the Commonwealth;

(iii) describes the program for the provision of such assistance, including the assistance to be provided and the persons to whom such assistance will be provided, and any agencies designated to provide such assistance, which program must meet such requirements as the Secretary may by regulation

prescribe for the purpose of assuring that assistance is provided to the most needy persons in the jurisdiction;

(iv) estimates the amount of expenditures necessary for the provision of the assistance described in the program and related administrative expenses, up to the amount provided for payment by subsection (a)(2)(B); and

(v) includes such other information as the Secretary may require.

(B)(i) The Secretary shall approve or disapprove any plan submitted pursuant to subparagraph (A) no later than August 1 of the year in which it is submitted. The Secretary shall approve any plan which complies with the requirements of subparagraph (A). If a plan is disapproved because it does not comply with any of the requirements of that paragraph the Secretary shall, except as provided in subparagraph (B)(ii), notify the appropriate agency in the Commonwealth that payments will not be made to it under subsection (a) for the fiscal year to which the plan applies until the Secretary is satisfied that there is no longer any such failure to comply, and until the Secretary is so satisfied, the Secretary will make no payments.

(ii) The Secretary may suspend the denial of payments under subparagraph (B)(i) for such period as the Secretary determines appropriate and instead withhold payments provided for under subsection (a), in whole or in part, for the fiscal year to which the plan applies, until the Secretary is satisfied that there is no longer any failure to comply with the requirements of subparagraph (A), at which time such withheld payments shall be paid.

(2)(A) The Commonwealth shall provide for a biennial audit of expenditures under its program for the provision of the assistance described in subsection (a)(2)(B), and within 120 days of the end of each fiscal year in which the audit is made, shall report to the Secretary the findings of such audit.

(B) Within 120 days of the end of the fiscal year, the Commonwealth shall provide the Secretary with a statement as to whether the payments received under subsection (a) for that fiscal year exceeded the expenditures by it during that year for which payment is authorized under this section, and if so, by how much, and such other information as the Secretary may require.

(C)(i) If the Secretary finds that there is a substantial failure by the Commonwealth to comply with any of the requirements of subparagraphs (A) and (B), or to comply with the requirements of subsection (b)(1)(A) in the administration of a plan approved under subsection (b)(1)(B), the Secretary shall, except as provided in subparagraph (C)(ii), notify the appropriate agency in the Commonwealth that further payments will not be made to it under subsection (a) until the Secretary is satisfied that there will no longer be any such failure to comply, and until the Secretary is so satisfied, the Secretary shall make no further payments.

(ii) The Secretary may suspend the termination of payments under subparagraph (C)(i) for such period as the Secretary determines appropriate, and instead withhold payments provided for under subsection (a), in whole or in part, until the Secretary is satisfied that there will no longer be any failure to comply with the

requirements of subparagraphs (A) and (B) and subsection (b)(1)(A), at which time such withheld payments shall be paid.

(iii) Upon a finding under subparagraph (C)(i) of a substantial failure to comply with any of the requirements of subparagraphs (A) and (B) and subsection (b)(1)(A), the Secretary may, in addition to or in lieu of any action taken under subparagraphs (C)(i) and (C)(ii), refer the matter to the Attorney General with a request that injunctive relief be sought to require compliance by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and upon suit by the Attorney General in an appropriate district court of the United States and a showing that noncompliance has occurred, appropriate injunctive relief shall issue.

(c)(1) The Secretary shall provide for the review of the programs for the provision of the assistance described in subsection (a)(2)(A) for which payments are made under this Act.

(2) The Secretary is authorized as the Secretary deems practicable to provide technical assistance with respect to the programs for the provision of the assistance described in subsection (a)(2)(A).

(d) Whoever knowingly and willfully embezzles, misapplies, steals, or obtains by fraud, false statement, or forgery, any funds, assets, or property provided or financed under this section shall be fined not more than \$10,000 or imprisoned for not more than five years, or both, but if the value of the funds, assets or property involved is not over \$200, the penalty shall be a fine of not more than \$1,000 or imprisonment for not more than one year, or both.

(e) REVIEW, REPORT, AND REGULATION OF CASH NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BENEFITS PROVIDED IN PUERTO RICO.—

(1) REVIEW.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall carry out a review of the provision of nutrition assistance in Puerto Rico in the form of cash benefits under this section that shall include—

(A) an examination of the history of and purpose for distribution of a portion of monthly benefits in the form of cash;

(B) an examination of current barriers to the redemption of non-cash benefits by current program participants and retailers;

(C) an examination of current usage of cash benefits for the purchase of non-food and other prohibited items;

(D) an identification and assessment of potential adverse effects of the discontinuation of a portion of benefits in the form of cash for program participants and retailers; and

(E) an examination of such other factors as the Secretary determines to be relevant.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate, a report that describes the results of the review conducted under this subsection.

(3) REGULATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), and notwithstanding the second sentence of subsection

(b)(1)(B)(i), the Secretary shall disapprove any plan submitted pursuant to subsection (b)(1)(A)—

(i) for fiscal year 2017 that provides for the distribution of more than 20 percent of the nutrition assistance benefit of a participant in the form of cash;

(ii) for fiscal year 2018 that provides for the distribution of more than 15 percent of the nutrition assistance benefit of a participant in the form of cash;

(iii) for fiscal year 2019 that provides for the distribution of more than 10 percent of the nutrition assistance benefit of a participant in the form of cash;

(iv) for fiscal year 2020 that provides for the distribution of more than 5 percent of the nutrition assistance benefit of a participant in the form of cash; and

(v) for fiscal year 2021 that provides for the distribution of any portion of the nutrition assistance benefit of a participant in the form of cash.

(B) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Secretary, informed by the report required under paragraph (2), may approve a plan that exempts participants or categories of participants if the Secretary determines that discontinuation of benefits in the form of cash is likely to have significant adverse effects.

(4) FUNDING.—Out of any funds made available under section 18 for fiscal year 2014, the Secretary shall make available to carry out the review and report described in paragraphs (1) and (2) \$1,000,000, to remain available until expended.

WORKFARE

SEC. 20. [7 U.S.C. 2029] (a)(1) The Secretary shall permit any political subdivision, in any State, that applies and submits a plan to the Secretary in compliance with guidelines promulgated by the Secretary to operate a workfare program pursuant to which every member of a household participating in the supplemental nutrition assistance program who is not exempt by virtue of the provisions of subsection (b) of this section shall accept an offer from such subdivision to perform work on its behalf, or may seek an offer to perform work, in return for compensation consisting of the allotment to which the household is entitled under section 8(a) of this Act, with each hour of such work entitling that household to a portion of its allotment equal in value to 100 per centum of the higher of the applicable State minimum wage or the Federal minimum hourly rate under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 [(29 U.S.C. 201 et seq.)].

(2)(A) The Secretary shall promulgate guidelines pursuant to paragraph (1) which, to the maximum extent practicable, enable a political subdivision to design and operate a workfare program under this section which is compatible and consistent with similar workfare programs operated by the subdivision.

(B) A political subdivision may comply with the requirements of this section by operating any workfare program which the Secretary determines meets the provisions and protections provided under this section.

(b) A household member shall be exempt from workfare requirements imposed under this section if such member is—

(1) exempt from section 6(d)(1) as the result of clause (B), (C), (D), (E), or (F) of section 6(d)(2);

(2) at the option of the operating agency, subject to and currently actively and satisfactorily participating at least 20 hours a week in a work activity required under title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.);

(3) mentally or physically unfit;

(4) under sixteen years of age;

(5) sixty years of age or older; or

(6) a parent or other caretaker of a child in a household in which another member is subject to the requirements of this section or is employed fulltime.

(c) No operating agency shall require any participating member to work in any workfare position to the extent that such work exceeds in value the allotment to which the household is otherwise entitled or that such work, when added to any other hours worked during such week by such member for compensation (in cash or in kind) in any other capacity, exceeds thirty hours a week.

(d) The operating agency shall—

(1) not provide any work that has the effect of replacing or preventing the employment of an individual not participating in the workfare program;

(2) provide the same benefits and working conditions that are provided at the job site to employees performing comparable work for comparable hours; and

(3) reimburse participants for actual costs of transportation and other actual costs all of which are reasonably necessary and directly related to participation in the program but not to exceed \$25 in the aggregate per month.

(e) The operating agency may allow a job search period, prior to making workfare assignments, of up to thirty days following a determination of eligibility.

(f) **DISQUALIFICATION.**—An individual or a household may become ineligible under section 6(d)(1) to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program for failing to comply with this section.

(g)(1) The Secretary shall pay to each operating agency 50 per centum of all administrative expenses incurred by such agency in operating a workfare program, including reimbursements to participants for work-related expenses as described in subsection (d)(3) of this section.

(2)(A) From 50 per centum of the funds saved from employment related to a workfare program operated under this section, the Secretary shall pay to each operating agency an amount not to exceed the administrative expenses described in paragraph (1) for which no reimbursement is provided under such paragraph.

(B) For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term “funds saved from employment related to a workfare program operated under this section” means an amount equal to three times the dollar value of the decrease in allotments issued to households, to the extent that such decrease results from wages received by members of such households for the first month of employment beginning after

the date such members commence such employment if such employment commences—

- (i) while such members are participating for the first time in a workfare program operated under this section; or
- (ii) in the thirty-day period beginning on the date such first participation is terminated.

(3) The Secretary may suspend or cancel some or all of these payments, or may withdraw approval from a political subdivision to operate a workfare program, upon a finding that the subdivision has failed to comply with the workfare requirements.

[SEC. 21. [7 U.S.C. 2030] DEMONSTRATION OF FAMILY INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM.¹⁶]

MINNESOTA FAMILY INVESTMENT PROJECT

SEC. 22. [7 U.S.C. 2031] (a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) Subject to paragraph (2), upon written application of the State of Minnesota that complies with this section and sections 6 to 11, 13, 130, and 132 of article 5 of 282 of the 1989 Laws of Minnesota, and after approval of such application by the Secretary in accordance with subsections (b) and (d), the State may implement a family investment demonstration project (hereinafter in this section referred to as the Project) in parts of the State to determine whether the Project more effectively helps families to become self-supporting and enhances their ability to care for their children than do the supplemental nutrition assistance program and programs under parts A and F of title IV of the Social Security Act. The State may provide cash payments under the Project, subject to paragraph (2), that replace assistance otherwise available under the supplemental nutrition assistance program and under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act.

(2) The Project may be implemented only in accordance with this section and only if the Secretary of Health and Human Services approves an application submitted by the State permitting the State to include in the Project families who are eligible to receive benefits under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act.

(b) REQUIRED TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE PROJECT.—The application submitted by the State under subsection (a) shall provide an assurance that the Project shall satisfy all of the following requirements:

(1) Only families may be eligible to receive assistance and services through the Project.

(2) Participating families, families eligible for or participating in the program authorized under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act or the supplemental nutrition assistance program that are assigned to and found eligible for the Project, and families required to submit an application for the Project that are found eligible for the Project shall be ineligible to receive benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

¹⁶Sec. 4115(b)(14) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110–246; 122 Stat. 1870) repealed section 21.

(3)(A) Subject to the provisions of this paragraph and any reduction imposed under subsection (c)(3) of this section, the value of assistance provided to participating families shall not be less than the aggregate value of the assistance such families could receive under the supplemental nutrition assistance program and part A of title IV of the Social Security Act if such families did not participate in the Project.

(B) For purposes of satisfying the requirement specified in subparagraph (A)—

(i) payments for child care expenses under the Project shall be considered part of the value of assistance provided to participating families with earnings;

(ii) payments for child care expenses for families without earnings shall not be considered part of the value of assistance provided to participating families or the aggregate value of assistance that such families could have received under the supplemental nutrition assistance program and part A of title IV of the Social Security Act; and

(iii) any child support payments not assigned to the State under the provisions of part A of title IV of the Social Security Act, less \$50 per month, shall be considered part of the aggregate value of assistance participating families would receive if such families did not participate in the Project;

(C) For purposes of satisfying the requirement specified in subparagraph (A), the State shall—

(i) identify the sets of characteristics indicative of families that might receive less assistance under the Project;

(ii) establish a mechanism to determine, for each participating family that has a set of characteristics identified under clause (i) whether such family could receive more assistance, in the aggregate, under the supplemental nutrition assistance program and part A of title IV of the Social Security Act if such family did not participate in the project;

(iii) increase the amount of assistance provided under the Project to any family that could receive more assistance, in the aggregate, under the supplemental nutrition assistance program and part A of title IV of the Social Security Act if such family did not participate in the Project, so that the assistance provided under the Project to such family is not less than the aggregate amount of assistance such family could receive under the supplemental nutrition assistance program and part A of title IV of the Social Security Act if such family did not participate in the Project; and

(iv) increase the amount of assistance paid to participating families, if the State or locality imposes a sales tax on food, by the amount needed to compensate for the tax. This subparagraph shall not be construed to require the State to make the determination under clause (ii) for families that do not have a set of characteristics identified under clause (i).

(D)(i) The State shall designate standardized amounts of assistance provided as food assistance under the Project and

notify monthly each participating family of such designated amount.

(ii) The amount of food assistance so designated shall be at least the value of benefits such family could have received under the supplemental nutrition assistance program if the Project had not been implemented. The provisions of this subparagraph shall not require that the State make individual determinations as to the amount of assistance under the Project designated as food assistance.

(iii) The State shall periodically allow participating families the option to receive such food assistance in the form of benefits.

(E)(i) Individuals ineligible for the Project who are members of a household including a participating family shall have their eligibility for the supplemental nutrition assistance program determined and have their benefits calculated and issued following the standards established under the supplemental nutrition assistance program, except as provided differently in this subparagraph.

(ii) The State agency shall determine such individuals' eligibility for benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program and the amount of such benefits without regard to the participating family.

(iii) In computing such individuals' income for purposes of determining eligibility (under section 5(c)(1)) and benefits, the State agency shall apply the maximum excess shelter expense deduction specified under section 5(e).

(iv) Such individuals' monthly allotment shall be the higher of \$10 or 75 percent of the amount calculated following the standards of the supplemental nutrition assistance program and the foregoing requirements of this subparagraph, rounded to the nearest lower whole dollar.

(4) The Project shall include education, employment, and training services equivalent to those offered under the employment and training program described in section 6(d)(4) to families similar to participating families elsewhere in the State.

(5) The State may select families for participation in the Project through submission and approval of an application for participation in the Project or by assigning to the Project families that are determined eligible for or are participating in the program authorized by part A of title IV of the Social Security Act or the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

(6) Whenever selection for participation in the Project is accomplished through submission and approval of an application for the Project—

(A) the State shall promptly determine eligibility for the Project, and issue assistance to eligible families, retroactive to the date of application, not later than thirty days following the family's filing of an application;

(B) in the case of families determined ineligible for the Project upon application, the application for the Project shall be deemed an application for the supplemental nutrition assistance program, and benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program shall be issued to

tion assistance program.

RESEARCH, DEMONSTRATION, AND EVALUATIONS

SEC. 17. [7 U.S.C. 2026] (a)(1) The Secretary may enter into contracts with or make grants to public or private organizations or agencies under this section to undertake research that will help improve the administration and effectiveness of the supplemental nutrition assistance program in delivering nutrition-related benefits. The waiver authority of the Secretary under subsection (b) shall extend to all contracts and grants under this section.

(2) The Secretary may, on application, permit not more than two State agencies to establish procedures that allow households whose monthly supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits do not exceed \$20, at their option, to receive, in lieu of their supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits for the initial period under section 8 and their regular allotment in following months, and at intervals of up to 3 months thereafter, aggregate allotments not to exceed \$60 and covering not more than 3 months' benefits. The allotments shall be provided in accordance with paragraphs (3) and (9) of section 11(e) (except that no household shall begin to receive combined allotments under this section until it has complied with all applicable verification requirements of section 11(e)(3)) and (with respect to the first aggregate allotment so issued) within 40 days of the last benefit issuance.

(b)(1)(A) The Secretary may conduct on a trial basis, in one or more areas of the United States, pilot or experimental projects designed to test program changes that might increase the efficiency of the supplemental nutrition assistance program and improve the delivery of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits to

(9) Assistance provided under the Project shall be reduced to reflect the pro rata value of any benefits received under the supplemental nutrition assistance program for the same period.

(10)(A) The State shall provide each family or family member whose participation in the Project ends and each family whose participation is terminated with notice of the existence of the supplemental nutrition assistance program and the person or agency to contact for more information.

(B)(i) Following the standards specified in subparagraph (C), the State shall ensure that benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program are provided to participating families in case the Project is terminated or to participating families or family members that are determined ineligible for the Project because of income, resources, or change in household composition, if such families or individuals are determined eligible for the supplemental nutrition assistance program. Benefits shall be issued to eligible families and individuals described in this clause retroactive to the date of termination from the Project; and

(ii) If sections 256.031 through 256.036 of the Minnesota Statutes, 1989 Supplement, or Minnesota Laws 1989, chapter 282, article 5, section 130, are amended to reduce or eliminate benefits provided under those sections or restrict the rights of Project applicants or participating families, the State shall exclude from the Project applicants or participating families or individuals affected by such amendments and follow the standards specified in subparagraph (C), except that the State shall continue to pay from State funds an amount equal to the food assistance portion to such families and individuals until the State determines eligibility or ineligibility for the supplemental nutrition assistance program or the family or individual has failed to supply the needed additional information within ten days. Food benefits shall be provided to families and individuals excluded from the Project under this clause who are determined eligible for the supplemental nutrition assistance program retroactive to the date of the determination of eligibility. The Secretary shall pay to the State the value of the benefits for which such families and individuals would have been eligible in the absence of food assistance payments under this clause from the date of termination from the Project to the date benefits are provided.

(C) Each family whose Project participation is terminated shall be screened for potential eligibility for the supplemental nutrition assistance program and if the screening indicates potential eligibility, the family or family member shall be given a specific request to supply all additional information needed to determine such eligibility and assistance in completing a signed supplemental nutrition assistance program application including provision of any relevant information obtained by the State for purpose of the Project. If the family or family member supplies such additional information within ten days after receiving the request, the State shall, within five days after the State receives such information, determine whether the family

or family member is eligible for the supplemental nutrition assistance program. Each family or family member who is determined through the screening or otherwise to be ineligible for the supplemental nutrition assistance program shall be notified of that determination.

(11) Section 11(e)(10) shall apply with respect to applicant and participating families in the same manner as such paragraph applies with respect to applicants and participants in the supplemental nutrition assistance program, except that families shall be given notice of any action for which a hearing is available in a manner consistent with the notice requirements of the regulations implementing sections 402(a)(4) and 482(h) of the Social Security Act.

(12) For each fiscal year, the Secretary shall not be liable for any costs related to carrying out the Project in excess of those that the Secretary would have been liable for had the Project not been implemented, except for costs for evaluating the Project, but shall adjust for the full amount of the federal share of increases or decreases in costs that result from changes in economic, demographic, and other conditions in the State based on data specific to the State, changes in eligibility or benefit levels authorized by this Act or changes in amounts of Federal funds available to States and localities under the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

(13) The State shall carry out the supplemental nutrition assistance program throughout the State while the State carries out the Project.

(14)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the State will carry out the Project during a five-year period beginning on the date the first family receives assistance under the Project.

(B) The Project may be terminated—

(i) by the State one hundred and eighty days after the State gives notice to the Secretary that it intends to terminate the Project;

(ii) by the Secretary one hundred and eighty days after the Secretary, after notice and an opportunity for a hearing, determines that the State materially failed to comply with this section; or

(iii) whenever the State and the Secretary jointly agree to terminate the Project.

(15) Not more than six thousand families may participate in the Project simultaneously.

(c) **ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE PROJECT.**—The Project shall be subject to the following additional terms and conditions:

(1) The State may require any parent in a participating family to participate in education, employment, or training requirements unless the individual is a parent in a family with one parent who—

(A) is ill, incapacitated, or sixty years of age or older;

(B) is needed in the home because of the illness or incapacity of another family member;

(C) is the parent of a child under one year of age and is personally providing care for the child;

(D) is the parent of a child under six years of age and is employed or participating in education or employment and training services for twenty or more hours a week;

(E) works thirty or more hours a week or, if the number of hours worked cannot be verified, earns at least the Federal minimum hourly wage rate multiplied by thirty per week; or

(F) is in the second or third trimester of pregnancy.

(2) The State shall not require any parent of a child under six years of age in a participating family with only one parent to be employed or participate in education or employment and training services for more than twenty hours a week.

(3) For any period during which an individual required to participate in education, employment, or training requirements fails to comply without good cause with a requirement imposed by the State under paragraph (1), the amount of assistance to the family under the Project may be reduced by an amount not more than 10 percent of the assistance the family would be eligible for with no income other than that from the Project.

(d) FUNDING.—

(1) If an application submitted under subsection (a) complies with the requirements specified in subsection (b), then the Secretary shall—

(A) approve such application; and

(B) subject to subsection (b)(12) from the funds appropriated under this Act provide grant awards and pay the State each calendar quarter for—

(i) the cost of food assistance provided under the Project equal to the amount that would have otherwise been issued in the form of benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program had the Project not been implemented, as estimated under a methodology satisfactory to the Secretary after negotiations with the State; and

(ii) the administrative costs incurred by the State to provide food assistance under the Project that are authorized under subsections (a), (g), (h)(2), and (h)(3) of section 16 equal to the amount that otherwise would have been paid under such subsections had the Project not been implemented, as estimated under a methodology satisfactory to the Secretary after negotiations with the State: *Provided*, That payments made under subsection (g) of section 16 shall equal payments that would have been made if the Project had not been implemented.

(2) The Secretary shall periodically adjust payments made to the State under paragraph (1) to reflect—

(A) the cost of benefits issued to individuals ineligible for the Project specified in subsection (b)(3)(E) in excess of the amount that would have been issued to such individuals had the Project not been implemented, as estimated

under a methodology satisfactory to the Secretary after negotiations with the State; and

(B) the cost of benefits issued to families exercising the option specified in subsection (b)(3)(D)(iii) in excess of the amount that would have been issued to such individuals had the Project not been implemented, as estimated under a methodology satisfactory to the Secretary after negotiations with the State.

(3) Payments under paragraph (1)(B) shall include adjustments, as estimated under a methodology satisfactory to the Secretary after negotiations with the State, for increases or decreases in the costs of providing food assistance and associated administrative costs that result from changes in economic, demographic, or other conditions in the State based on data specific to the State, changes in eligibility or benefit levels authorized by this Act and changes in or additional amounts of Federal funds available to States and localities under the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

(e) WAIVER.—With respect to the Project, the Secretary shall waive compliance with any requirement contained in this Act (other than this section) that, if applied, would prevent the State from carrying out the Project or effectively achieving its purpose.

(f) PROJECT AUDITS.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) conduct periodic audits of the operation of the Project to verify the amounts payable to the State from time to time under subsection (d); and

(2) submit to the Secretary, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report describing the results of each such audit.

(g) CONSTRUCTION.—(1) For purposes of any Federal, State, or local law other than part A of title IV of the Social Security Act or this Act—

(A) cash assistance provided under the Project that is designated as food assistance by the State shall be treated in the same manner as benefits allotments under the supplemental nutrition assistance program are treated; and

(B) participating families shall be treated in the same manner as participants in the supplemental nutrition assistance program are treated.

(2) Nothing in this section shall—

(A) allow payments made to the State under the Project to be less than the amounts the State and eligible households within the State would have received if the Project had not been implemented; or

(B) require the Secretary to incur costs as a result of the Project in excess of costs that would have been incurred if the Project had not been implemented, except for costs for evaluation.

(h) QUALITY CONTROL.—Participating families shall be excluded from any sample taken for purposes of making any determination under section 16(c). For purposes of establishing the total

value of allotments under section 16(c)(1), benefits and the amount of federal liability for food assistance provided under the Project as limited by subsection (b)(12) of this section shall be treated as allotments issued under the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

(i) **EVALUATION.**—(1) The State shall develop and implement a plan for an independent evaluation designed to provide reliable information on Project impacts and implementation. The evaluation will include treatment and control groups and will include random assignment of families to treatment and control groups in an urban setting. The evaluation plan shall satisfy the evaluation concerns of the Secretary of Agriculture such as effects on benefits to participants, costs of the Project, payment accuracy, administrative consequences, any reduction in welfare dependency, any reduction in total assistance payments, and the consequences of cash payments on household expenditures, and food consumption. The evaluation plan shall take into consideration the evaluation requirements and administrative obligations of the State. The evaluation will measure the effects of the Project in regard to goals of increasing family income, prevention of long-term dependency, movement toward self-support, and simplification of the welfare system.

(2) The State shall pay 50 percent of the cost of developing and implementing such plan and the Federal Government shall pay the remainder.

(j) **DEFINITIONS.**—For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) The term “family” means the following individuals who live together: a minor child or a group of minor children related to each other as siblings, half siblings, stepsiblings, or adopted siblings, together with their natural or adoptive parents, or their caregiver. Family also includes a pregnant woman in the third trimester of pregnancy with no children.

(2) The term “contract” means a plan to help a family pursue self-sufficiency, based on the State’s assessment of the family’s needs and abilities and developed with a parental caregiver.

(3) The term “caregiver” means a minor child’s natural or adoptive parent or parents who live in the home with the minor child. For purposes of determining eligibility for the Project, “caregiver” also means any of the following individuals who live with and provide care and support to a minor child when the minor child’s natural or adoptive parent or parents do not reside in the same home: grandfather, grandmother, brother, sister, stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother, stepsister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, persons of preceding generations as denoted by prefixes of “great” or “great-great” or a spouse of any person named in the above groups even after the marriage ends by death or divorce.

(4) The term “State” means the State of Minnesota.

SEC. 23. [7 U.S.C. 2032] AUTOMATED DATA PROCESSING AND INFORMATION RETRIEVAL SYSTEMS.

(a) **STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES FOR REVIEWS.**—

(1) **INITIAL REVIEWS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall complete

a review of regulations and standards (in effect on the date of enactment of this section) for the approval of an automated data processing and information retrieval system maintained by a State (hereinafter in this section referred to as a “system”) to determine the extent to which the regulations and standards contribute to a more effective and efficient program.

(B) REVISION OF REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall revise regulations (in effect on the date of enactment of this Act) to take into account the findings of the review conducted under subparagraph (A).

(C) INCORPORATION OF EXISTING SYSTEMS.—The regulations shall require States to incorporate all or part of systems in use elsewhere, unless a State documents that the design and operation of an alternative system would be less costly. The Secretary shall establish standards to define the extent of modification of the systems for which payments will be made under either section 16(a) or 16(g).

(D) IMPLEMENTATION.—Proposed systems shall meet standards established by the Secretary for timely implementation of proper changes.

(E) COST EFFECTIVENESS.—Criteria for the approval of a system under section 16(g) shall include the cost effectiveness of the proposed system. On implementation of the approved system, a State shall document the actual cost and benefits of the system.

(2) OPERATIONAL REVIEWS.—The Secretary shall conduct such reviews as are necessary to ensure that systems—

(A) comply with conditions of initial funding approvals; and

(B) adequately support program delivery in compliance with this Act and regulations issued under this Act.

(b) STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL OF SYSTEMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—After conducting the review required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall establish standards for approval of systems.

(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—A State shall implement the standards established by the Secretary within a reasonable period of time, as determined by the Secretary.

(3) PERIODIC COMPLIANCE REVIEWS.—The Secretary shall conduct appropriate periodic reviews of systems to ensure compliance with the standards established by the Secretary.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than October 1, 1993, the Secretary shall report to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate on the extent to which State agencies have developed and are operating effective systems that support supplemental nutrition assistance program delivery in compliance with this Act and regulations issued under this Act.

[SEC. 24. [7 U.S.C. 2033] TERRITORY OF AMERICAN SAMOA.¹⁷]**SEC. 25. [7 U.S.C. 2034] ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY FOOD PROJECTS.**

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **COMMUNITY FOOD PROJECT.**—In this section, the term “community food project” means a community-based project that—

(A) requires a 1-time contribution of Federal assistance to become self-sustaining; and

(B) is designed—

(i)(I) to meet the food needs of low-income individuals through food distribution, community outreach to assist in participation in Federally assisted nutrition programs, or improving access to food as part of a comprehensive service;

(II) to increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for the food needs of the communities; and

(III) to promote comprehensive responses to local food, food access, farm, and nutrition issues; or

(ii) to meet specific State, local, or neighborhood food and agricultural needs, including needs relating to—

(I) equipment necessary for the efficient operation of a project;

(II) planning for long-term solutions; or

(III) the creation of innovative marketing activities that mutually benefit agricultural producers and low-income consumers.

(2) **GLEANER.**—The term “gleaner” means an entity that—

(A) collects edible, surplus food that would be thrown away and distributes the food to agencies or nonprofit organizations that feed the hungry; or

(B) harvests for free distribution to the needy, or for donation to agencies or nonprofit organizations for ultimate distribution to the needy, an agricultural crop that has been donated by the owner of the crop.

(3) **HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES GOAL.**—The term “hunger-free communities goal” means any of the 14 goals described in House Concurrent Resolution 302, 102nd Congress, agreed to October 5, 1992.

(b) **AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—From amounts made available to carry out this Act, the Secretary may make grants to assist eligible private nonprofit entities to establish and carry out community food projects.

(2) **LIMITATION ON GRANTS.**—The total amount of funds provided as grants under this section may not exceed—

(A) \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 1996;

(B) \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2014;

(C) \$9,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2018; and

¹⁷Sec. 4124(b) of P.L. 107–171 (116 Stat. 325) repealed sec. 24.

- (D) \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 2019 and each fiscal year thereafter.
- (c) **ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.**—To be eligible for a grant under subsection (b), a public food program service provider, a tribal organization, or a private nonprofit entity, including gleaners, must—
- (1) have experience in the area of—
 - (A) community food work, particularly concerning small and medium-sized farms, including the provision of food to people in low-income communities and the development of new markets in low-income communities for agricultural producers;
 - (B) job training and business development activities for food-related activities in low-income communities; or
 - (C) efforts to reduce food insecurity in the community, including food distribution, improving access to services, or coordinating services and programs;
 - (2) demonstrate competency to implement a project, provide fiscal accountability, collect data, and prepare reports and other necessary documentation;
 - (3) demonstrate a willingness to share information with researchers, practitioners, and other interested parties; and
 - (4) collaborate with 1 or more local partner organizations to achieve at least 1 hunger-free communities goal.
- (d) **PREFERENCE FOR CERTAIN PROJECTS.**—In selecting community food projects to receive assistance under subsection (b), the Secretary shall give a preference to projects designed to—
- (1) develop linkages between 2 or more sectors of the food system;
 - (2) support the development of entrepreneurial projects;
 - (3) develop innovative linkages between the for-profit and nonprofit food sectors;
 - (4) encourage long-term planning activities, and multi-system, interagency approaches with multistakeholder collaborations, that build the long-term capacity of communities to address the food and agricultural problems of the communities, such as food policy councils and food planning associations; or
 - (5) develop new resources and strategies to help reduce food insecurity in the community and prevent food insecurity in the future by—
 - (A) developing creative food resources;
 - (B) coordinating food services with park and recreation programs and other community-based outlets to reduce barriers to access; or
 - (C) creating nutrition education programs for at-risk populations to enhance food-purchasing and food-preparation skills and to heighten awareness of the connection between diet and health.
- (e) **MATCHING FUNDS REQUIREMENTS.**—
- (1) **REQUIREMENTS.**—The Federal share of the cost of establishing or carrying out a community food project that receives assistance under subsection (b) may not exceed 50 percent of the cost of the project during the term of the grant.
 - (2) **CALCULATION.**—In providing for the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out a community food project, the entity

receiving the grant shall provide for the share through a payment in cash or in kind, fairly evaluated, including facilities, equipment, or services.

(3) SOURCES.—An entity may provide for the non-Federal share through State government, local government, or private sources.

(f) TERM OF GRANT.—

(1) SINGLE GRANT.—A community food project may be supported by only a single grant under subsection (b).

(2) TERM.—The term of a grant under subsection (b) may not exceed 5 years.

(g) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND RELATED INFORMATION.—

(1) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary may provide technical assistance regarding community food projects, processes, and development to an entity seeking the assistance.

(2) SHARING INFORMATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may provide for the sharing of information concerning community food projects and issues among and between government, private for-profit and nonprofit groups, and the public through publications, conferences, and other appropriate forums.

(B) OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES.—The Secretary may share information concerning community food projects with researchers, practitioners, and other interested parties.

(h) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than September 30, 2014, and each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that describes each grant made under this section, including—

(1) a description of any activity funded;

(2) the degree of success of each activity funded in achieving hunger-free community goals; and

(3) the degree of success in improving the long-term capacity of a community to address food and agriculture problems related to hunger or access to healthy food.

SEC. 26. [7 U.S.C. 2035] SIMPLIFIED SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITION OF FEDERAL COSTS.—In this section, the term “Federal costs” does not include any Federal costs incurred under section 17.

(b) ELECTION.—Subject to subsection (d), a State may elect to carry out a simplified supplemental nutrition assistance program (referred to in this section as a “Program”), statewide or in a political subdivision of the State, in accordance with this section.

(c) OPERATION OF PROGRAM.—If a State elects to carry out a Program, within the State or a political subdivision of the State—

(1) a household in which no members receive assistance under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) may not participate in the Program;

(2) a household in which all members receive assistance under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the

Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) shall automatically be eligible to participate in the Program;

(3) if approved by the Secretary, a household in which 1 or more members but not all members receive assistance under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) may be eligible to participate in the Program; and

(4) subject to subsection (f), benefits under the Program shall be determined under rules and procedures established by the State under—

(A) a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.);

(B) the supplemental nutrition assistance program; or

(C) a combination of a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) and the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

(d) APPROVAL OF PROGRAM.—

(1) STATE PLAN.—A State agency may not operate a Program unless the Secretary approves a State plan for the operation of the Program under paragraph (2).

(2) APPROVAL OF PLAN.—The Secretary shall approve any State plan to carry out a Program if the Secretary determines that the plan—

(A) complies with this section; and

(B) contains sufficient documentation that the plan will not increase Federal costs for any fiscal year.

(e) INCREASED FEDERAL COSTS.—

(1) DETERMINATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall determine whether a Program being carried out by a State agency is increasing Federal costs under this Act.

(B) NO EXCLUDED HOUSEHOLDS.—In making a determination under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall not require the State agency to collect or report any information on households not included in the Program.

(C) ALTERNATIVE ACCOUNTING PERIODS.—The Secretary may approve the request of a State agency to apply alternative accounting periods to determine if Federal costs do not exceed the Federal costs had the State agency not elected to carry out the Program.

(2) NOTIFICATION.—If the Secretary determines that the Program has increased Federal costs under this Act for any fiscal year or any portion of any fiscal year, the Secretary shall notify the State not later than 30 days after the Secretary makes the determination under paragraph (1).

(3) ENFORCEMENT.—

(A) CORRECTIVE ACTION.—Not later than 90 days after the date of a notification under paragraph (2), the State shall submit a plan for approval by the Secretary for prompt corrective action that is designed to prevent the Program from increasing Federal costs under this Act.

(B) TERMINATION.—If the State does not submit a plan under subparagraph (A) or carry out a plan approved by

the Secretary, the Secretary shall terminate the approval of the State agency operating the Program and the State agency shall be ineligible to operate a future Program.

(f) RULES AND PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In operating a Program, a State or political subdivision of a State may follow the rules and procedures established by the State or political subdivision under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) or under the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

(2) STANDARDIZED DEDUCTIONS.—In operating a Program, a State or political subdivision of a State may standardize the deductions provided under section 5(e). In developing the standardized deduction, the State shall consider the work expenses, dependent care costs, and shelter costs of participating households.

(3) REQUIREMENTS.—In operating a Program, a State or political subdivision shall comply with the requirements of—

(A) subsections (a) through (f) of section 7;

(B) section 8(a) (except that the income of a household may be determined under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.));

(C) subsections (b) and (d) of section 8;

(D) subsections (a), (c), (d), and (n) of section 11;

(E) paragraphs (8), (12), (15), (17), (18), (22), and (23) of section 11(e);

(F) section 11(e)(10) (or a comparable requirement established by the State under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)); and

(G) section 16.

(4) LIMITATION ON ELIGIBILITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a household may not receive benefits under this section as a result of the eligibility of the household under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), unless the Secretary determines that any household with income above 130 percent of the poverty guidelines is not eligible for the program.

SEC. 27. [7 U.S.C. 2036] AVAILABILITY OF COMMODITIES FOR THE EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) PURCHASE OF COMMODITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—From amounts made available to carry out this Act, for each of the fiscal years 2014 through 2023, the Secretary shall purchase a dollar amount described in paragraph (2) of a variety of nutritious and useful commodities of the types that the Secretary has the authority to acquire through the Commodity Credit Corporation or under section 32 of the Act entitled “An Act to amend the Agricultural Adjustment Act, and for other purposes”, approved August 24, 1935 (7 U.S.C. 612c), and distribute the commodities to States for distribution in accordance with section 214 of the Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983 (7 U.S.C. 7515).

(2) AMOUNTS.—The Secretary shall use to carry out paragraph (1)—

(A) for fiscal year 2008, \$190,000,000;

(B) for fiscal year 2009, \$250,000,000;

(C) for each of fiscal years 2010 through 2023, the dollar amount of commodities specified in subparagraph (B) adjusted by the percentage by which the thrifty food plan has been adjusted under section 3(u)(4) between June 30, 2008, and June 30 of the immediately preceding fiscal year;

(D) for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2023, the sum obtained by adding the total dollar amount of commodities specified in subparagraph (C) and—

(i) for fiscal year 2015, \$50,000,000;

(ii) for fiscal year 2016, \$40,000,000;

(iii) for fiscal year 2017, \$20,000,000;

(iv) for fiscal year 2018, \$15,000,000;

(v) for fiscal year 2019, \$23,000,000;

(vi) for fiscal year 2020, \$35,000,000;

(vii) for fiscal year 2021, \$35,000,000;

(viii) for fiscal year 2022, \$35,000,000; and

(ix) for fiscal year 2023, \$35,000,000; and

(E) for fiscal year 2024 and each subsequent fiscal year, the total dollar amount of commodities specified in subparagraph (D)(ix) adjusted by the percentage by which the thrifty food plan has been adjusted under section 3(u)(4) to reflect changes between June 30, 2023, and June 30 of the immediately preceding fiscal year.

(3) FUNDS AVAILABILITY.—For purposes of the funds described in this subsection, the Secretary shall—

(A) make the funds available for 2 fiscal years; and

(B) allow States to carry over unexpended balances to the next fiscal year pursuant to such terms and conditions as are determined by the Secretary.

(b) BASIS FOR COMMODITY PURCHASES.—In purchasing commodities under subsection (a), the Secretary shall, to the extent practicable and appropriate, make purchases based on—

(1) agricultural market conditions;

(2) preferences and needs of States and distributing agencies; and

(3) preferences of recipients.

SEC. 28. [7 U.S.C. 2036a] NUTRITION EDUCATION AND OBESITY PREVENTION GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—In this section, the term “eligible individual” means an individual who is eligible to receive benefits under a nutrition education and obesity prevention program under this section as a result of being—

(1) an individual eligible for benefits under—

(A) this Act;

(B) sections 9(b)(1)(A) and 17(c)(4) of the Richard B Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1758(b)(1)(A), 1766(c)(4)); or

(C) section 4(e)(1)(A) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1773(e)(1)(A));

(2) an individual who resides in a community with a significant low-income population, as determined by the Secretary; or

(3) such other low-income individual as is determined to be eligible by the Secretary.

(b) PROGRAMS.—Consistent with the terms and conditions of grants awarded under this section, State agencies may implement a nutrition education and obesity prevention program for eligible individuals that promotes healthy food choices and physical activity consistent with the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans published under section 301 of the National Nutrition Monitoring and Related Research Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5341).

(c) DELIVERY OF NUTRITION EDUCATION AND OBESITY PREVENTION SERVICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—State agencies may deliver nutrition education and obesity prevention services under a program described in subsection (b)—

(A) directly to eligible individuals; or

(B) through agreements with other State or local agencies or community organizations.

(2) NUTRITION EDUCATION STATE PLANS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A State agency that elects to provide nutrition education and obesity prevention services under this subsection shall submit to the Secretary for approval a nutrition education State plan.

(B) REQUIREMENTS.—A nutrition education State plan shall—

(i) identify the uses of the funding for local projects;

(ii) ensure that the interventions are appropriate for eligible individuals who are members of low-income populations by recognizing the constrained resources, and the potential eligibility for Federal food assistance programs, of members of those populations;

(iii) describe how the State agency shall use an electronic reporting system to—

(I) measure and evaluate the projects; and

(II) account for the allowable State agency administrative costs including for—

(aa) salaries and benefits of State agency personnel;

(bb) office supplies and equipment;

(cc) travel costs;

(dd) development and production of nutrition education materials;

(ee) memberships, subscriptions, and professional activities;

(ff) lease or rental costs;

(gg) maintenance and repair expenses;

(hh) indirect costs; and

(ii) cost of using publicly-owned building space; and

(iv) conform to standards established by the Secretary through regulations, guidance, or grant award documents.

(3) USE OF FUNDS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A State agency may use funds provided under this section for any evidence-based allowable use of funds identified by the Administrator of the Food and Nutrition Service of the Department of Agriculture in consultation with the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the Department of Health and Human Services, including—

(i) individual and group-based nutrition education, health promotion, and intervention strategies;

(ii) comprehensive, multilevel interventions at multiple complementary organizational and institutional levels; and

(iii) community and public health approaches to improve nutrition.

(B) CONSULTATION.—In identifying allowable uses of funds under subparagraph (A) and in seeking to strengthen delivery, oversight, and evaluation of nutrition education, the Administrator of the Food and Nutrition Service shall consult with the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and outside stakeholders and experts, including—

(i) representatives of the academic and research communities;

(ii) nutrition education practitioners;

(iii) representatives of State and local governments; and

(iv) community organizations that serve low-income populations.

(4) NOTIFICATION.—To the maximum extent practicable, State agencies shall notify applicants, participants, and eligible individuals under this Act of the availability of nutrition education and obesity prevention services under this section in local communities.

(5) COORDINATION.—Subject to the approval of the Secretary, projects carried out with funds received under this section may be coordinated with the expanded food and nutrition education program or other health promotion or nutrition improvement strategies, whether public or privately funded, if the projects carried out with funds received under this section remain under the administrative control of the State agency.

(6) INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE.—The Secretary shall establish an online clearinghouse that makes available to State agencies, local agencies, institutions of higher education, and community organizations best practices for planning, implementing, and evaluating nutrition education and obesity prevention services to ensure that projects carried out with funds received under this section are appropriate for the target population.

(7) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall provide technical assistance to a State agency in developing and implementing a nutrition education State plan, including—

(A) by identifying common challenges faced by entities described in paragraph (6) that participate in projects carried out with funds received under this section;

(B) by coordinating efforts to address those common challenges;

(C) by collecting and disseminating information on evidence-based practices relating to nutrition education and obesity prevention;

(D) by facilitating communication between and among grantees and subgrantees of funds received under this section;

(E) by assisting State agencies in creating or maintaining systems to compile program data; and

(F) by performing or assisting with other activities, as determined by the Secretary.

(8) ANNUAL STATE REPORT.—Each State agency that delivers nutrition education and obesity prevention services under this subsection shall submit to the Secretary an annual report, which shall be made publicly available by the Secretary, that includes—

(A) the use of funds on the State agency's program, including for each category of allowable State agency administrative costs identified in paragraph (2)(B)(iii)(II);

(B) a description of each project carried out by that agency under this subsection, including, with respect to the project, the target population, interventions, educational materials used, key performance indicators used, and evaluations made;

(C) a comprehensive analysis of the impacts and outcomes—

(i) of the project, including with respect to the elements described in subparagraph (A); and

(ii) to the extent practicable, of completed multiyear projects; and

(D) the status of any ongoing multiyear project.

(9) ANNUAL FEDERAL REPORT.—The Administrator of the Food and Nutrition Service, in consultation with the Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, shall annually submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that—

(A) evaluates the level of coordination between—

(i) the nutrition education and obesity prevention grant program under this section;

(ii) the expanded food and nutrition education program under section 1425 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3175); and

(iii) any other nutrition education program administered by the Department of Agriculture; and

(B) includes the use of funds on such programs including State agency administrative costs reported by States under paragraph (8)(A).

(d) FUNDING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Of funds made available each fiscal year under section 18(a)(1), the Secretary shall reserve for allocation to State agencies to carry out the nutrition education and obesity prevention grant program under this section, to remain available for obligation for a period of 2 fiscal years—

- (A) for fiscal year 2011, \$375,000,000;
- (B) for fiscal year 2012, \$388,000,000;
- (C) for fiscal year 2013, \$285,000,000;
- (D) for fiscal year 2014, \$401,000,000;
- (E) for fiscal year 2015, \$407,000,000; and
- (F) for fiscal year 2016 and each subsequent fiscal

year, the applicable amount during the preceding fiscal year, as adjusted to reflect any increases for the 12-month period ending the preceding June 30 in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor.

(2) ALLOCATION.—

(A) INITIAL ALLOCATION.—Of the funds set aside under paragraph (1), as determined by the Secretary—

(i) for each of fiscal years 2011 through 2013, 100 percent shall be allocated to State agencies in direct proportion to the amount of funding that the State received for carrying out section 11(f) (as that section existed on the day before the date of enactment of this section) during fiscal year 2009, as reported to the Secretary as of February 2010; and

(ii) subject to a reallocation under subparagraph (B)—

(I) for fiscal year 2014—

(aa) 90 percent shall be allocated to State agencies in accordance with clause (i); and

(bb) 10 percent shall be allocated to State agencies based on the respective share of each State of the number of individuals participating in the supplemental nutrition assistance program during the 12-month period ending the preceding January 31;

(II) for fiscal year 2015—

(aa) 80 percent shall be allocated to State agencies in accordance with clause (i); and

(bb) 20 percent shall be allocated in accordance with subclause (I)(bb);

(III) for fiscal year 2016—

(aa) 70 percent shall be allocated to State agencies in accordance with clause (i); and

(bb) 30 percent shall be allocated in accordance with subclause (I)(bb);

(IV) for fiscal year 2017—

(aa) 60 percent shall be allocated to State agencies in accordance with clause (i); and

(bb) 40 percent shall be allocated in accordance with subclause (I)(bb); and (V) for fiscal year 2018 and each fiscal year thereafter—

(aa) 50 percent shall be allocated to State agencies in accordance with clause (i); and

(bb) 50 percent shall be allocated in accordance with subclause (I)(bb).

(B) REALLOCATION.—

(i) **IN GENERAL.—**If the Secretary determines that a State agency will not expend all of the funds allocated to the State agency for a fiscal year under paragraph (1) or in the case of a State agency that elects not to receive the entire amount of funds allocated to the State agency for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall reallocate the unexpended funds to other States during the fiscal year or the subsequent fiscal year (as determined by the Secretary) that have approved State plans under which the State agencies may expend the reallocated funds.

(ii) **EFFECT OF ADDITIONAL FUNDS.—**

(I) **FUNDS RECEIVED.—**Any reallocated funds received by a State agency under clause (i) for a fiscal year shall be considered to be part of the fiscal year 2009 base allocation of funds to the State agency for that fiscal year for purposes of determining allocation under subparagraph (A) for the subsequent fiscal year.

(II) **FUNDS SURRENDERED.—**Any funds surrendered by a State agency under clause (i) shall not be considered to be part of the fiscal year 2009 base allocation of funds to a State agency for that fiscal year for purposes of determining allocation under subparagraph (A) for the subsequent fiscal year.

(3) LIMITATION ON FEDERAL FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION.—

(A) **IN GENERAL.—**Grants awarded under this section shall be the only source of Federal financial participation under this Act in nutrition education and obesity prevention.

(B) **EXCLUSION.—**Any costs of nutrition education and obesity prevention in excess of the grants authorized under this section shall not be eligible for reimbursement under section 16(a).

(e) **IMPLEMENTATION.—**Not later than January 1, 2012, the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register a description of the requirements for the receipt of a grant under this section.

SEC. 29. [7 U.S.C. 2036b] RETAIL FOOD STORE AND RECIPIENT TRAFFICKING.

(a) **PURPOSE.—**The purpose of this section is to provide the Department of Agriculture with additional resources to prevent trafficking in violation of this Act by strengthening recipient and retail food store program integrity.

(b) **USE OF FUNDS.—**

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Additional funds are provided under this section to supplement the retail food store and recipient integrity activities of the Department.

(2) **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES.**—The Secretary shall use an appropriate amount of the funds provided under this section to employ information technologies known as data mining and data warehousing and other available information technologies to administer the supplemental nutrition assistance program and enforce regulations promulgated under section 4(c).

(c) **FUNDING.**—

(1) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2023.

(2) **MANDATORY FUNDING.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer to the Secretary to carry out this section not less than \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 2014, to remain available until expended.

(B) **RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE.**—The Secretary shall be entitled to receive, shall accept, and shall use to carry out this section the funds transferred under subparagraph (A), without further appropriation.

(C) **MAINTENANCE OF FUNDING.**—The funding provided under subparagraph (A) shall supplement (and not supplant) other Federal funding for programs carried out under this Act.

SEC. 30. [7 U.S.C. 2036d] PILOT PROJECTS TO ENCOURAGE THE USE OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTED TO ADDRESSING FOOD INSECURITY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may, on application of eligible entities, approve not more than 10 pilot projects to support public-private partnerships that address food insecurity and poverty.

(b) **DEFINITIONS.**—For purposes of this section—

(1) the term “eligible entity” means—

- (A) a nonprofit organization;
- (B) a community-based organization;
- (C) an institution of higher education; or
- (D) a private entity, as determined by the Secretary;

and

(2) the term “public agency” means a department, agency, other unit, or instrumentality of Federal, State, or local government.

(c) **PROJECT REQUIREMENTS.**—Projects approved under this section shall—

- (1) be limited to 2 years in length; and
- (2) include a collaboration between one or more public agencies and one or more eligible entities that—
 - (A) improves the effectiveness and impact of the supplemental nutrition assistance program;
 - (B) develops food security solutions that are specific to the needs of a community or region; and
 - (C) strengthens the capacity of communities to address food insecurity and poverty.

(d) EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall provide for an independent evaluation of pilot projects approved under this section that includes—

(1) a summary of the activities conducted under the pilot projects;

(2) an assessment of the effectiveness of the pilot projects; and

(3) best practices regarding the use of public-private partnerships to improve the effectiveness of public benefit programs to address food insecurity and poverty.