

Senate Bill 856

Sponsored by Senators MEEK, PATTERSON, HANSELL; Senators DEMBROW, FREDERICK, GELSER BLOUIN, GIROD, GORSEK, HAYDEN, WOODS, Representatives HELM, HUDSON, LEVY B, LIVELY, MANNIX, NERON, NOSSE, OWENS, SMITH G

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Establishes COFA Food Assistance Program to provide nutrition assistance to COFA citizens who would qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits but for their immigration status and who have incomes at or below federal poverty guidelines.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to food assistance for COFA citizens.

3 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

4 **SECTION 1. (1) As used in this section:**

5 (a) **"COFA citizen" means an individual who is a citizen of:**

6 (A) **The Republic of the Marshall Islands;**

7 (B) **The Federated States of Micronesia; or**

8 (C) **The Republic of Palau.**

9 (b) **"Eligible food" means food and beverages eligible for purchase with an Oregon Trail**
10 **Card.**

11 (c) **"Income" means the gross income of an individual minus any deductions or exclusions**
12 **that would be applied to the individual's income in determining Supplemental Nutrition As-**
13 **sistance Program benefits.**

14 (d) **"Oregon Trail Card" means an electronic benefits transfer card used to purchase food**
15 **through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Oregon.**

16 (2) **The COFA Food Assistance Program is established in the Department of Human**
17 **Services. The purpose of the program is to provide food assistance to COFA citizens who**
18 **would qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits but for their immi-**
19 **gration status.**

20 (3) **Enrollees in the COFA Food Assistance Program shall be issued Oregon Trail Cards**
21 **to purchase eligible foods from retailers, farmers and other food outlets that accept Oregon**
22 **Trail Cards.**

23 (4) **An individual is eligible for the COFA Food Assistance Program if the individual:**

24 (a) **Resides in this state;**

25 (b) **Is a COFA citizen;**

26 (c) **Does not qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits; and**

27 (d) **Has income at or below the federal poverty guidelines.**

28 (5) **The gross income of an individual who is eligible for COFA Food Assistance Program**
29 **benefits who is in a household that receives Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**
30 **benefits is the pro rata share of the household's income that is attributed to the individual**

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 in determining the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits for the members of
2 the household who qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits.

3 (6) The department shall integrate the application process for the COFA Food Assistance
4 Program into the application process for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program so
5 that the eligibility of a household consisting of COFA citizens and other residents of this
6 state may be processed simultaneously. The department shall provide culturally and linguis-
7 tically appropriate assistance, in person and by telephone, to applicants for and enrollees in
8 the COFA Food Assistance Program. The application process, forms and notices used in the
9 COFA Food Assistance Program must conform to the guidance adopted by the United States
10 Department of Health and Human Services, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights
11 Act of 1964, regarding the prohibition against national origin discrimination affecting persons
12 with limited English proficiency in federally funded programs.

13 (7) The Department of Human Services shall accept as verification of eligibility the
14 attestation of an applicant for or enrollee in the COFA Food Assistance Program that the
15 applicant or enrollee meets the requirements of subsection (4) of this section.

16 (8) The department shall conduct outreach as described in ORS 413.612 (4)(e) to facilitate
17 applications for and enrollment in the COFA Food Assistance Program.

18 (9) The department may not disclose personally identifying information about applicants
19 for or enrollees in the COFA Food Assistance Program except to the extent necessary to
20 conduct outreach under subsection (8) of this section or to comply with federal or state laws.
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