

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2023

Legislative Document

No. 1584

H.P. 1029

House of Representatives, April 11, 2023

**An Act to Provide Funding for the Supplemental Nutrition
Assistance Program to Temporarily Restore Benefits Being Reduced
by the Federal Government**

(AFTER DEADLINE)

(EMERGENCY)

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 205.

Reference to the Committee on Health and Human Services suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative STOVER of Boothbay.
Cosponsored by Senator VITELLI of Sagadahoc and
Representatives: CLOUTIER of Lewiston, GRAHAM of North Yarmouth, GRAMLICH of
Old Orchard Beach, MEYER of Eliot, MILLETT of Waterford, PLUECKER of Warren,
Speaker TALBOT ROSS of Portland, Senator: BRENNER of Cumberland.

1 **Emergency preamble.** Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not
2 become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

3 **Whereas,** during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Federal Government increased the
4 level of benefits available under the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program,
5 or SNAP; and

6 **Whereas,** those extended benefits are scheduled to expire March 1, 2023; and

7 **Whereas,** due to rising costs of food and other necessities of living, the sudden
8 termination of these benefits creates a crisis for families that depend on the extended
9 benefits; and

10 **Whereas,** in order to avoid that crisis, the level of benefits under SNAP needs to be
11 restored as soon as possible and recipients given a chance to adjust to a lower level of
12 benefits; and

13 **Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within
14 the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as
15 immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now,
16 therefore,

17 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

18 **Sec. 1. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and
19 allocations are made.

20 **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF**
21 **Food Supplement Administration Z019**

22 Initiative: Provides a one-time appropriation for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance
23 Program benefit payments to continue for 6 months, replacing the expiring COVID-19
24 emergency benefit allotments under the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act.
25 The one-time appropriation will allow for an extension to the emergency benefits
26 previously provided by the Federal Government with General Fund funding for the
27 following 6 months of 2023 at the following levels: March, 100% of the previous federal
28 emergency benefit level; April, 75% of the previous federal emergency benefit level; May,
29 50% of the previous federal emergency benefit level; and June through August, 25% of the
30 previous federal emergency benefit level.

31	GENERAL FUND	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
32	All Other	\$48,000,000	\$9,600,000	\$0
33				
34	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$48,000,000</u>	<u>\$9,600,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>

35 **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation
36 takes effect when approved.

37 **SUMMARY**

38 Under the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act, the Federal Government
39 provided emergency benefit allotments under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance

1 Program, or SNAP. These emergency benefit allotments are scheduled to expire March 1,
2 2023.

3 This bill extends for 6 months, but on a decreasing basis, the amount of benefits
4 available under SNAP by providing General Fund funds to provide the following level of
5 benefits:

- 6 1. In March 2023, 100% of the federal emergency benefit allotment;
 - 7 2. In April 2023, 75% of the federal emergency benefit allotment;
 - 8 3. In May 2023, 50% of the federal emergency benefit allotment; and
 - 9 4. From June through August 2023, 25% of the federal emergency benefit allotment.
- 10 Beginning in September 2023, an additional amount is not provided.