

Senator Hansen offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 69.

A resolution to memorialize Congress and the United States Department of Agriculture to expedite the rulemaking process with regard to certain elements of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Whereas, While it is always important to identify and eliminate all abuses in the expenditure of public money, this is especially true during this period of prolonged financial distress and continuing strain on the limited resources available to help those in need. It is essential to ensure that every dollar devoted to social service initiatives is spent wisely and for the intended purpose; and

Whereas, Amendments made to the New Eligibility Disqualifications language (Section 4131) of the Food Stamp Provision of Title IV of the 2008 Farm Bill disqualify individuals from food stamps for intentionally obtaining cash by using food stamps to buy a product with a returnable container, discarding the contents, and then returning the container for the deposit amount. Although the practice of intentionally discarding the contents of a container to get the deposit money is prohibited, three years later, the federal rulemaking process is not complete. Without penalties in place, the policy prohibiting this type of fraud is yet to be fully implemented. In the meantime, retailers must continue to pay out deposit money in situations where they can see abuses of the program; and

Whereas, Every effort to cheat the system weakens public support for programs designed to help the needy in times of difficulty. Clearly, without faith in the integrity of these public efforts, such efforts lose support and are placed in jeopardy; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we memorialize Congress and the United States Department of Agriculture to expedite the rulemaking process with regard to the provisions of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) that disqualify from SNAP benefits any person found to have intentionally obtained cash by purchasing, with food stamps, products with containers requiring return deposits and, after discarding the contents, returning the container for the deposit; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.