S-2124.1

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**SENATE BILL 5897**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Rossi, Brown, Braun, Becker, Walsh, Schoesler, Honeyford, and Zeiger

AN ACT Relating to food assistance programs; amending RCW 74.08A.120; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  RCW 74.08A.120 and 1999 c 120 s 4 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The department may establish a food assistance program for legal immigrants who are ineligible for the federal food stamp program.

(2) The rules for the state food assistance program shall follow exactly the rules of the federal food stamp program except for the provisions pertaining to immigrant status and subsection (6) of this section.

(3) The benefit under the state food assistance program shall be established by the legislature in the biennial operating budget.

(4) The department may enter into a contract with the United States department of agriculture to use the existing federal food stamp program coupon system for the purposes of administering the state food assistance program.

(5) In the event the department is unable to enter into a contract with the United States department of agriculture, the department may issue vouchers to eligible households for the purchase of eligible foods at participating retailers.

(6) For the purposes of this section, "eligible foods" does not include sweetened beverages, desserts, and candy.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The department of social and health services shall seek all necessary exemptions and waivers from and amendments to federal statutes, rules, and regulations to authorize Washington state to prohibit the purchase of sweetened beverages, desserts, and candy with supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits.

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