
Early Learning & Human Services Committee

HB 1388

Brief Description: Concerning mobile market programs.

Sponsors: Representatives Bernbaum, Parshley, Scott, Hill, Richards, Salahuddin, Berg, Simmons, Davis, Thai, Peterson, Reed, Ramel, Cortes, Taylor, Wylie, Pollet and Timmons.

Brief Summary of Bill
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Creates the mobile market program which provides increased nutrition access to participants of the Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program and the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program by serving areas without a local farmer's market.

Hearing Date: 1/28/25

Staff: Luke Wickham (786-7146).

Background:

Mobile Markets.

Mobile markets operate using vehicles like buses, vans, trucks, or semi-trailers with refrigeration to provide greater access to fresh foods and to increase farm sales in areas without easy access to fresh fruits and vegetables. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has provided funding for mobile markets through cooperative agreements to facilitate healthy food choices to low food access communities, also known as food deserts.

The Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program.

The Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program (WIC) is a nutrition program for people who are pregnant, have recently delivered a baby, are breast and chest feeding, and infants and

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children under five years old. Fathers, grandparents, and other caregivers of children under five may sign those children up for WIC. Foster children under five are also eligible for WIC. WIC is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and administered in the State of Washington by the Department of Health.

WIC provides assistance to eligible families to purchase baby formula and certain healthy foods, including fruits and vegetables at farmers markets. Eligible families will receive a WIC card, shopping list, and shopping guide to assist in shopping for WIC eligible foods.

Generally, eligibility depends on household size and income. For a family of three, the maximum annual income to qualify for WIC is \$47,767.

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program.

The Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) provides benefits to lower-income adults to purchase locally grown fruits, vegetables, honey, and herbs. The program is funded through a combination of federal grants from the USDA and administered in Washington through the Department of Social and Health Services.

Individuals who are age 60 or older and Native Americans/Alaska Natives age 55 or older with a monthly income below 185% of the federal poverty level are eligible for SFMNP benefits.

Summary of Bill:

The mobile market program is created in the Department of Health (DOH) with the goals of providing increased nutrition access to participants of the Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program (WIC) and the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP), while also supporting local farmers.

The mobile market program is available to participants of WIC and the SFMNP so long as funding is made available to the DOH through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The DOH must define the mobile market program through rulemaking, including a requirement for mobile market programs to be operated by a nonprofit organization and serve an area that does not have a farmers market.

If the DOH deems it necessary to file a waiver with the USDA, it must file a waiver requesting approval for the mobile market programs to accept both WIC and SFMNP benefits.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on May 1, 2025.