

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2714

As Passed Senate, March 4, 2026

Title: An act relating to caseload forecasting for food assistance programs.

Brief Description: Concerning caseload forecasting for food assistance programs.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Bergquist, Couture, Ormsby, Macri and Gregerson).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/12/26, 95-0.

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 2/24/26, 3/02/26 [DP].

Floor Activity: Passed Senate: 3/4/26, 49-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Caseload Forecast Council to forecast the state Food Assistance Program and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Robinson, Chair; Stanford, Vice Chair, Operating; Trudeau, Vice Chair, Capital; Frame, Vice Chair, Finance; Gildon, Ranking Member, Operating; Torres, Assistant Ranking Member, Operating; Schoesler, Ranking Member, Capital; Dozier, Assistant Ranking Member, Capital; Boehnke, Braun, Cleveland, Conway, Dhingra, Hansen, Hasegawa, Kauffman, Muzzall, Pedersen, Riccelli, Saldaña, Wagoner, Warnick, Wellman and Wilson, C..

Staff: Tianyi Lan (786-7432)

Background: The Caseload Forecast Council. The Caseload Forecast Council (CFC) consists of two individuals appointed by the Governor, and four individuals, one of whom is

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appointed by the chairperson of each of the two largest political caucuses in the Senate and the House of Representatives. CFC oversees the preparation and approval of the official state caseload forecasts.

CFC estimates the number of persons expected to meet entitlement requirements and require the services of public assistance programs including state correctional institutions; state correctional noninstitutional supervision; state institutions for juvenile offenders; the common school and charter school systems; long-term care; medical assistance; foster care; the College Bound Scholarship Program; and adoption support. The Council meets several times a year to adopt official forecasts, which become the basis of the Governor's budget document and the biennial operating budget enacted by the Legislature.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the Washington State Food Assistance Program. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a federally funded program that provides a monthly food benefit to low-income households. The state-funded Food Assistance Program (FAP) for legal immigrants provides the same monthly benefit to low-income households who do not qualify for the SNAP solely on the basis of their immigration status.

Historically, SNAP benefits have been entirely paid for with federal funding. Under newly enacted federal requirements taking effect October 1, 2027, states must pay a portion of the total amount of SNAP benefits if the state exceeds a certain payment error rate. The FAP is exclusively state funded.

Summary of Bill: CFC must forecast the state FAP and SNAP.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The forecast would be a helpful tool and provide useful information as the state develops the budget. SNAP is an important federal model in use for years to solve the hunger problem. The bill helps the state figure out how to backfill the critical programs.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Sheri Sawyer, Office of Financial Management; Michael Moran, Second Harvest Inland Northwest.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.