

Rep. Mayes offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 154.

A resolution to memorialize the United States Congress to investigate and adjust the formula for allocating funding to the states for the Emergency Food Assistance Program.

Whereas, The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which was first authorized in 1981, is a federal program administered in our state by the Michigan Department of Education. Through TEFAP, the United States Department of Agriculture provides commodity foods to supplement the diets of low-income Americans, including senior citizens. The amount of food provided by the federal government to Michigan is based on the number of unemployed persons and the number of people with incomes below the poverty level. Food provided to Michigan is then distributed to local agencies selected to deliver the food to those who qualify. It is a critical program that maintains proper nutrition, especially in our rural areas where there are no other options for emergency food assistance; and

Whereas, TEFAP also provides administrative funds to help pay for the shipping, packaging, and distribution of food to eligible families. This funding has traditionally helped offset the total costs of delivering the food packages to eligible families, but has not covered the complete cost. Unfortunately, the federal formula for distributing food aid to the states is inappropriate for allocating administrative funding to local agencies that participate in TEFAP. The new allocation formula to local agencies approved by the Michigan Department of Education, which is based on the federal food distribution formula, has broken the traditional linkage between families served and administrative funding support levels. As a result, organizations that currently participate in the program will have to end their role because they do not have the resources to make up for the loss of administrative funding from the federal government that will take place in the new fiscal year. Many needy people will lose this lifeline of nutritional support and will face daunting choices between purchasing food or medicine with their own meager resources; and

Whereas, It is imperative that the United States Congress correct the hardship that will unfold in the new fiscal year. The new administrative support funding formula for TEFAP does not reflect the challenges of delivering food in a rural environment that covers great distances. At a time when our state is struggling to regain our economic momentum, we must not place an added burden on our most vulnerable citizens by depriving them of crucial direct nutrition support. Without adequate administrative funding, food will not make it to the tables of our rural poor; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the United States Congress to investigate and adjust the formula for allocating funding to the states for the Emergency Food Assistance Program; 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.