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HOUSE BILL NO. 1723
AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
(Proposed by the House Committee on Appropriations
on January 31, 2025)
(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Price)

A BILL to direct the Department of Social Services to convene a work group to evaluate methods to improve access and maximize participation in federal public assistance programs relating to assistance with food access and improving food security.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. That the Department of Social Services shall convene a work group with such members as it deems necessary or appropriate to evaluate methods to improve access and maximize participation in all federal public assistance programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture relating to assistance with food access and improving food security. The work group shall collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including the Commission to End Hunger, to evaluate the following: (i) removing administrative barriers to applying for participation in federal public assistance programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture relating to assistance with food access and improving food security; (ii) improving outreach to increase awareness of such programs among individuals who would otherwise be eligible to participate in such programs but may not be aware of such programs; and (iii) collecting relevant data. In conducting its work, the work group shall consider the specific needs and circumstances of different populations and demographics in the Commonwealth and how those needs and circumstances could increase barriers to program access and impact the efficacy of outreach campaigns and methods. The Department of Social Services shall report the work group's findings and recommendations to the Chairs of the House Committees on Health and Human Services and Appropriations and the Senate Committees on Education and Health and Finance and Appropriations by December 1, 2025.