

1 VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

2 *An Act to direct the Department of Social Services to convene a work group to evaluate methods to improve*
3 *access and maximize participation in federal public assistance programs relating to assistance with food*
4 *access and improving food security.*

5 [H 1723]
6 Approved

7 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

8 **1. § 1.** *That the Department of Social Services shall convene a work group with such members as it deems*
9 *necessary or appropriate to evaluate methods to improve access and maximize participation in all federal*
10 *public assistance programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture relating to assistance with*
11 *food access and improving food security. The work group shall collaborate with relevant stakeholders,*
12 *including the Commission to End Hunger, to evaluate the following: (i) removing administrative barriers to*
13 *applying for participation in federal public assistance programs administered by the U.S. Department of*
14 *Agriculture relating to assistance with food access and improving food security; (ii) improving outreach to*
15 *increase awareness of such programs among individuals who would otherwise be eligible to participate in*
16 *such programs but may not be aware of such programs; and (iii) collecting relevant data. In conducting its*
17 *work, the work group shall consider the specific needs and circumstances of different populations and*
18 *demographics in the Commonwealth and how those needs and circumstances could increase barriers to*
19 *program access and impact the efficacy of outreach campaigns and methods. The Department of Social*
20 *Services shall report the work group's findings and recommendations to the Chairs of the House Committees*
21 *on Health and Human Services and Appropriations and the Senate Committees on Education and Health*
22 *and Finance and Appropriations by December 1, 2025.*