

TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE



FISCAL NOTE

HB 1238 – SB 1279

March 8, 2019

**SUMMARY OF BILL:** Requires verification of United States citizenship or lawful presence for each applicant 18 years of age or older who applies for prenatal care or the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), administered by the Department of Health (DOH).

**ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:**

**Other Fiscal Impact – The provisions of this legislation will likely result in a decrease in eligible participants in the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and could jeopardize a significant portion of the federal funding received for WIC; however, the extent and timing for any such impacts cannot be reasonably determined.**

Assumptions:

- WIC is a federally-funded program designed to provide supplemental food assistance and nutrition education to low-income pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants, and children until age five.
- Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 4-58-110(3)-(4), individuals who apply for prenatal care or the WIC program are exempt from being required to provide verification of United States citizenship or lawful presence.
- Federal funding for WIC is awarded in two components: food grants and nutrition services and administration (NSA) grants. Grant funding is dependent on the number of eligible participants for each state.
- NSA grants cover the cost of staff employed in local WIC clinics and health departments across the state.
- Based on information provided by the United States Department of Agriculture, the average monthly participation in FY17-18 for the WIC program in Tennessee was 127,814.
- In FY17-18, Tennessee received \$69,427,984 from the WIC food grant and \$41,098,906 from the NSA grant.
- The DOH does not currently collect citizenship information for these programs; therefore, the number of individuals participating in these programs who would not meet the verification requirements of the proposed legislation is unknown.

- The number of staff reductions in local WIC clinics and health departments as a result of a decrease in NSA funding is unknown.
- Passage of this legislation will likely result in a decrease in eligible WIC participants and could jeopardize a significant portion of the federal funding received for the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children; however, the extent and timing for any such decrease cannot be reasonably determined.

**CERTIFICATION:**

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Krista Lee Carsner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Krista Lee Carsner, Executive Director

/vlh