

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2641
By: Rodriguez
Human Services
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

More than 40 states, including Texas, have adopted what is known as broad-based categorical eligibility for SNAP benefits, which allows more low-income households in need to qualify for assistance. In adopting broad-based categorical eligibility nearly two decades ago, the Texas Legislature provided for the exclusion of \$15,000 of the fair market value of a motor vehicle and \$4,650 of the fair market value of any other motor vehicle from the applicant's household resources. Despite the fact that the cost of a new motor vehicle has nearly doubled in that time, the amounts of these exclusions have remained unchanged. C.S.H.B. 2641 seeks to provide for an annual inflation adjustment of these exclusions.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2641 amends the Human Resources Code to require the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission by rule to adjust for inflation the maximum amount of the fair market value of a motor vehicle that may be excluded from the resources of an applicant's household for purposes of determining the applicant's eligibility for SNAP benefits not later than October 1 of each year to reflect the percentage difference between the following:

- the average index level set by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; and
- the new vehicles index of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers during the most recent 12-month period ending in June.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 2641 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

Whereas the original required the executive commissioner to adjust for inflation the maximum amount of the fair market value of only the highest valued motor vehicle that may be excluded, the substitute requires the executive commissioner instead to adjust for inflation the maximum amount of the fair market value of any motor vehicle that may be excluded.