

33RD ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Session

State Capitol, Rm. 434
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 465-4940

Interim

1500 W. Benson Blvd
Anchorage, AK 99503
(907) 269-0120



House Military and Veterans
Affairs Committee

House Judiciary Committee

House Ways and Means Committee

Rep.Andrew.Gray@akleg.gov

REPRESENTATIVE ANDREW GRAY

House Bill 198 Ver. A Sponsor Statement

A backlog in processing applications for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program began in August of 2022 and continues to this day. This has triggered unprecedented warnings from the federal government, risking the state's federal funding for this crucial program. The human cost of this inability to effectively process applications is tens of thousands of Alaskans going hungry across the state.

One way to reduce the backlog and streamline the SNAP application process is to reduce the number of times that applicants need to apply for SNAP recertification. Historically, Alaska has had one of the shortest certification periods in the country at 6 months (national average was 14.7 months in FY 19), creating significant administrative burdens and slowing down the application process. This certification period has been extended under regulation in recent months, but the length of this certification period is not codified in statute.

House Bill 198 would automatically certify each eligible household for the longest certification period permitted under federal law, reducing administrative burden for the Division of Public Assistance. I urge your support for the passage of HB 198.