

STATE OF ALASKA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

1978

Source

HR 17

House
Resolve No.

1



Relating to the size of food stamp allotments in the rural areas of Alaska.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

WHEREAS the purpose of the federal food stamp program is to insure that adequate nourishment is available to all Americans; and

WHEREAS the size of the food stamp allotment is based on cost-of-living figures developed by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics; and

WHEREAS food stamp allotments for all Alaska are based on cost-of-living figures for the city of Anchorage, despite the considerable variation in the cost of living between Anchorage and the rural areas of the state; and

WHEREAS food costs in Bethel are over 40 per cent higher than those in Anchorage, and a similar situation exists in other areas of rural Alaska; and

WHEREAS for this reason the food stamp recipient in those areas is able to purchase far fewer groceries than a recipient in Anchorage or in the rest of the nation; and

WHEREAS this situation works a hardship of considerable magnitude in Bethel, where 70 per cent of the people have incomes within the federal poverty income guidelines, and in the many other rural areas of the state similarly situated; and

WHEREAS in these areas of high cost of living and high incidence of poverty there is in effect a frustration of the purpose of the food stamp program in relation to the eligible residents of those areas; and

WHEREAS repeated efforts of the Alaska congressional delegation and the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services to get the U. S. Department of Agriculture to consider the cost-of-living differential between the urban and rural areas of the state have not resulted in any policy change by that department, despite the fact that cost-of-living information is available from the University of Alaska;

BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State House of Representatives that it respectfully requests the Department of Agriculture to join with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor; the Alaska Department of Labor, and the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services to determine the cost of living in the rural areas of Alaska, and to adjust food stamp allotments accordingly.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Jimmy Carter, President of the United States; the Honorable Bob Bergland, Secretary of Agriculture; the Honorable Julius Shiskin, Commissioner, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Mike Gravel, U. S. Senators; and the Honorable Don Young, U. S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.