



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 131

February Session, 2016

Substitute Senate Bill No. 241

Senate, March 22, 2016

The Committee on Aging reported through SEN. FLEXER of the 29th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT INCREASING THE DOLLAR VALUE OF FARMERS' MARKET VOUCHERS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 22-6q of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
3 *1, 2016*):

4 (a) There is established the Connecticut Farmers' Market/Senior
5 Nutrition Program which shall be provided for from funds available to
6 the commissioner and from other sources as such funds may become
7 available. The program shall supply Connecticut-grown fresh produce
8 to senior participants through the distribution of vouchers that are
9 redeemable only at designated Connecticut farmers' markets. The
10 Commissioner of Agriculture shall establish the dollar value of the
11 vouchers, provided such value shall not be less than twenty-five
12 dollars for each participant. For purposes of this section, a "senior
13 participant" is defined as a person who is sixty years of age or older
14 and is currently residing in elderly housing, or is a participant of a

15 registered congregate meal site, or has been identified by a municipal
 16 elderly agent as being at nutritional risk. The program is designed to
 17 provide both a supplemental source of fresh produce for the dietary
 18 needs of seniors who are judged to be at nutritional risk and to
 19 stimulate an increased demand for Connecticut-grown produce at
 20 Connecticut farmers' markets.

21 Sec. 2. (*Effective July 1, 2016*) The sum of ____ dollars is appropriated
 22 to the Department of Agriculture from the General Fund, for the fiscal
 23 year ending June 30, 2017, to increase the dollar value of Connecticut
 24 Farmers' Market/Senior Nutrition Program vouchers to twenty-five
 25 dollars each and to ensure that a sufficient number of vouchers are
 26 available.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2016	22-6q(a)
Sec. 2	July 1, 2016	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 1(a), "twenty-five dollars" was changed to "twenty-five dollars for each participant" for clarity.

AGE Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 17 \$	FY 18 \$
Department of Agriculture	GF - Cost	218,162	218,162

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill requires the Department of Agriculture (DoAg) to set the value of Senior Food Vouchers at no less than \$25 and appropriates an unspecified amount of funding to DoAg for this program.

It would cost \$218,162 annually for DoAg to provide coupons worth \$25 to eligible clients based on the current number of coupons issued. In 2015, there were 31,166 books distributed worth \$18 each.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact is determined by the appropriation.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 241*****AN ACT INCREASING THE DOLLAR VALUE OF FARMERS' MARKET VOUCHERS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the agriculture commissioner to set the value of the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program vouchers at no less than \$25. Under current practice, eligible seniors receive program vouchers worth \$18.

The bill also appropriates an unspecified amount in FY 17 from the General Fund to the Department of Agriculture for the vouchers' increased value and to ensure that a sufficient number of vouchers are available.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2016

BACKGROUND***Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program***

By law, the agriculture commissioner must establish the program within available funds. The program must supply Connecticut-grown produce to people age 60 or older who (1) live in elderly housing, (2) participate in a registered congregate meal site, or (3) have been identified by a municipality as being at nutritional risk. Participants receive vouchers redeemable at designated Connecticut farmers' markets.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Aging Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 13 Nay 0 (03/08/2016)