

By: Representative Warren

To: Public Health and Welfare

HOUSE BILL NO. 864

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 43-1-28, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 PROVIDE THAT BEFORE A PERSON MAY USE AN ELECTRONIC BENEFIT
3 TRANSFER (EBT) CARD TO ACCESS FOOD STAMP BENEFITS OR TANF PAYMENTS
4 THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES' EBT SYSTEM, THE PERSON
5 MUST PRESENT A GOVERNMENT-ISSUED IDENTIFICATION CARD WITH A
6 PHOTOGRAPH OF THE PERSON, TO ALLOW A DETERMINATION OF WHETHER THE
7 PERSON SEEKING TO USE THE EBT CARD IS ACTUALLY THE PERSON TO WHOM
8 THE CARD WAS ISSUED; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

10 **SECTION 1.** Section 43-1-28, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
11 amended as follows:

12 43-1-28. (1) The Department of Human Services shall develop
13 an on-line electronic benefit transfer (EBT) system for the food
14 stamp program in Mississippi as an alternative to issuing food
15 stamp coupons. The EBT system developed by the department under
16 this section shall (a) provide that food stamp benefits are stored
17 in and issued from a central computer data base and are
18 electronically accessed by households at the point of sale through
19 the use of reusable magnetic-stripe plastic cards; and (b) meet
20 all requirements and standards specified in 7 USCS Section 2016(i)
21 and the rules and regulations issued under that provision for
22 approval by the Secretary of the United States Department of
23 Agriculture.

24 (2) The department shall develop the EBT system and shall
25 submit an application to the Secretary of the United States
26 Department of Agriculture for approval of the system. After the
27 EBT system has been approved, the department shall implement and
28 operate the system as a pilot project in a county selected by the
29 department. After the pilot project has been evaluated and
30 approved by the United States Department of Agriculture, and



31 subject to the availability of funds specifically appropriated
32 therefor, the system may be expanded statewide at a rate
33 determined by the Executive Director of the Department of Human
34 Services. The system shall be expanded and implemented statewide
35 not later than October 1, 2002.

36 (3) The department shall seek to obtain the maximum amount
37 of federal financial participation available to fund the cost of
38 administering the EBT system.

39 (4) The Department of Human Services may develop an on-line
40 electronic benefit transfer (EBT) system for the Temporary
41 Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program in Mississippi as an
42 alternative to issuing cash or voucher payments. The EBT system
43 developed by the department under this section shall (a) provide
44 that TANF benefits are stored in and issued from a central
45 computer data base and are electronically accessed; and (b) meet
46 all requirements and standards specified in the Personal
47 Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996
48 (Public Law 104-193), and the rules and regulations issued under
49 that act. The department shall seek to obtain the maximum amount
50 of federal financial participation available to fund the cost of
51 administering the EBT system for TANF payments.

52 (5) In order to facilitate the acquisition and deployment of
53 EBT products and services in Mississippi, the Department of Human
54 Services (DHS) and the Mississippi Department of Information
55 Technology Services (MDITS), at their discretion, may utilize EBT
56 agreements from other states and/or multistate coalition
57 agreements that allow other states to acquire EBT products and
58 services. After going through the approved ITS bidding process
59 and the state is unable to acquire an EBT contract, DHS and ITS
60 may negotiate an EBT contract with any vendor who meets DHS and
61 ITS, EBT requirements.

62 (6) Before a person may use an EBT card to access food stamp
63 benefits or TANF payments through the Department of Human



64 Services' EBT system, the person must present to the vendor or the
65 issuer of the benefits a government-issued identification card
66 with a photograph of the person, to allow the vendor or issuer of
67 benefits to determine if the person seeking to use the EBT card is
68 actually the person to whom the card was issued.

69 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
70 and after July 1, 2003.

