

FACT SHEET

HF 2030: Pricey & pointless

This bill would have the Iowa Department of Human Services implement a complex quarterly eligibility verification system for lowans enrolled in public assistance programs including Medicaid, SNAP (Food Assistance) and TANF (Family Investment Program).

Maintaining program integrity in our safety-net programs is a shared goal — as advocates, we want every dollar to go to families who need the help. But HF 2030 is not a common-sense approach. It's a pointless, pricey scheme that will increase bureaucratic red tape and administrative costs and make it harder for lowans to stay healthy, put food on the table and support their families.

HF 2030 is a solution in search of a problem.

It's pointless.

- **DHS already verifies identity, income and other eligibility criteria using an array of state and federal sources**, including the IRS, Social Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security and PARIS, a data-matching service that identifies people receiving duplicate benefits in more than one state. In many cases, the eligibility parameters currently in use are more stringent than those proposed in this bill.
- **Two states that passed similar legislation in 2017 and 2018, Mississippi and Oklahoma respectively, have not moved forward** because of implementation challenges and difficulty squaring the bill's requirements with standing federal law.
- **It will cut families off who are eligible, but face barriers to reporting — and it won't even save money.** LSA review of a similar bill last year found that "[q]uarterly reviews have the potential to reduce public assistance program enrollment, but no significant savings are expected because many items that would be reviewed quarterly are currently checked on a frequent basis."

It's pricey.

- **In fact, it's likely to cost the state a lot.** It would require a complex new IT system and new DHS staff to review paperwork on discrepancies flagged by the system. It would also require the state to operate or contract out for a call center for people under review and investigation.
- **It also calls for the state to operate or contract out for a new, untested home-visiting program to monitor program use and eligibility.** A deficit-based approach like this will be expensive — home visiting is a resource-intensive strategy whatever its aims — and is at odds with current evidence-based practice, in which skilled home visitors build positive, trusting relationships with families to help them develop the parenting and life skills to meet their goals. It will likely discourage families who could benefit from proven home-visiting programs from participating.

