

# FINANCIAL STABILITY

Despite the increasing number of Texans struggling with the rising cost of food and other expenses due to inflation, including ALICE, lawmakers failed to make progress on housing affordability and stability for low-income Texans, access to quality, affordable transportation, childcare investments, and other issues impacting the financial stability. The Legislature failed to move childcare priorities forward. They did not approve a \$2.3 billion childcare funding proposal pushed by advocates, including many of our Texas United Ways, or provide any additional state funding—above federal funding draw-down requirements—to support childcare.

Fortunately, after many years of advocacy by our network and anti-hunger partners, lawmakers passed important laws that will prevent hunger for Texans experiencing food insecurity. HB 1287 modernizes the SNAP Vehicle Asset Test by applying an inflationary adjustment to the current limits and HB 1743 supports people exiting the criminal justice system by allowing eligible individuals to apply for SNAP before their release so that they have access to food upon release. These bills were signed by the Governor and they will take effect Sept. 1, 2023.

## Passed

### **Childcare Sector**

SB 1145 by Sen. West allows municipalities or counties to exempt licensed childcare facilities from property taxes collected by that taxing entity if at least 20% of their students receive subsidies.

SB 1327 by Sen. Blanco allows new directors to begin serving while giving them a 12-month grace period to complete the necessary education requirements.

### **Safety Net & Basic Needs**

HB 1287 by Rep. Guillen makes a one-time inflationary adjustment to the Vehicle Asset Test to better reflect today's car values, increasing limits from \$15,000 to \$22,500 for the first car and from \$4,650 to \$8,700 for additional vehicles.

HB 1743 by Rep. Leach allows certain individuals exiting the criminal justice system to apply for SNAP before their release.

SB 379 by Sen. Huffman exempts diapers, maternity clothes, baby wipes, and menstrual products from sales tax.

# Passed

## **Housing and Transportation**

HB 299 by Rep. Murr establishes accredited recovery housing in Texas.

HB 1193 by Rep. Turner prohibits an HOA from restricting a property owner from renting to a person based on their method of payment, such as Section 8.

HB 2071 by Rep. Jetton increases accountability and standards of public facility corporations (PFC)-owned developments that receive tax breaks.

## **Fair Lending & Financial Health**

SB 1379 by Sen. Parker establishes a Foster Youth Financial Pilot to assist foster youth in achieving financial security as they transition to independent living post foster care.

## **Other Barriers to Financial Stability**

SB 347 by Sen. Zaffirini and HB 842 by Rep. Patterson establishes a fixed 90-day period during which a disqualification or suspension of a person's driver's license is extended because of the person being convicted of driving while their license is invalid providing persons with old citations the opportunity to escape from a never-ending cycle of license suspensions.

HB 842 by Rep. Patterson prohibits the extension of the period of a driver's license suspension for certain driving while license invalid convictions.

*Key Budget Items: \$400,000 each fiscal year for the operation of a transitional housing pilot program; \$6 million for Nutrition Incentives Programs that match SNAP participants' purchases at farmer's markets as well as \$10.2 million increase in funding for the Surplus Agricultural Products Grant; and \$48.9 million to non-profits or local governments to provide direct services to Texas veterans and their families.*