

Cynthia Lizotte  
Sabattus

With respect to LD 287 - An Act to Require Electronic Benefits Transfer Cards to be Printed with the Beneficiary's Photograph, I would like to testify in opposition of this Act. The State tried this a few years ago, printing EBT cards with beneficiary photos. In my opinion it was a waste of time and state money. Many households receiving food supplement benefits have multiple household members, some have more than 10 members. Each member of the household is authorized to use the EBT card. Putting the case head's picture on the EBT card will not be beneficial to all the other household members who may use the card. Also, per Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service 7 CFR Parts 271, 272, 273, 274, and 278 states that anyone with a valid pin may use the card even if he/she is not pictured on the card. It also states households have the right to permit other individuals to use the household's EBT card on an ad hoc basis for the purpose of attaining assistance with purchasing food. Here is the link to this information previously mentioned:  
<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2016-12-13/pdf/2016-29841.pdf>. When this EBT photo program was previously rolled out across the State of Maine it created more of a hardship for employees of the Department of Health & Human Services Office for Family Independence. It creates more walk-in traffic and unnecessary work for a department that is already understaffed. Often times the equipment provided to take the photos was not in working condition and people requesting the photos were unable to be served. I do not believe this Act will help the Department in any way and will just create more of a burden. Stores are not allowed to ask to see the cards and cannot refuse sale to a person whose picture is not on the card so long as they have the pin number for the card. I realized people believe having a person's photo on the card may deter them from selling or trading their benefits for things such as drugs. To be completely frank, if an addict wants to sell their benefit they are going to do so regardless of whether or not their photo is on that card. Addicts more often than not are not thinking logically and will not be deterred from engaging in illegal activity just because their photo is on the EBT card. Thank you for your time and consideration.