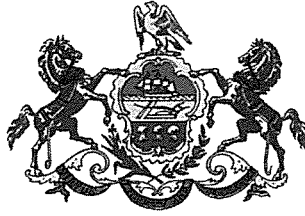


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*Senate of Pennsylvania*

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**MAR 26 2012**

**TO:** ALL SENATORS  
**FROM:** Senator Patricia H. Vance  
**DATE:** March 23, 2012  
**SUBJECT:** Memo #33- LB & FC study of impact of EBT cards with photo identification

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In the near future, I will be introducing a resolution to direct the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study whether any state savings could be generated by placing photo identification or other identifying information on the electronic benefits transfer (EBT) cards used for public assistance benefits.

The Department of Public Welfare issues EBT cards, otherwise known as ACCESS cards, to recipients receiving benefits in the following categories:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or food stamps)
- Special allowance program
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- General Assistance

These cards have a personal identification number that allows recipients to use them at either ATMs or at point-of-sale machines where they are swiped upon purchase much like a debit card.

Several months ago, the Auditor General released a report indicating the opportunity for a large amount of fraud involving the illegal use of the EBT cards. He recommended exploring the use of biometric smart cards which would include, among other identifying information, a photograph of the recipient.

This resolution would charge LB & FC with examining the costs associated with increasing the amount of identifying information on the EBT cards and analyzing the savings generated through reduction of fraudulent activities.

If you would like to co-sponsor this measure, please contact Kit Davis at [kdavis@pasen.gov](mailto:kdavis@pasen.gov).