

(4) is likely to have significant adverse economic impacts on the local economy in a manner that is unfair to innocent parties;

(5) is not justified in light of the penalties already imposed on the contractor for violations relevant to the proposed debarment, including any suspension or debarment arising out of the same matter that is imposed by any Federal or State agency; or

(6) is not in the public interest, or otherwise is not in the interests of justice, as determined by the Secretary.

**(f) Exhaustion of administrative remedies**

Prior to seeking judicial review in a court of competent jurisdiction, a contractor against whom a nonprocurement debarment proceeding has been initiated shall—

(1) exhaust all administrative procedures prescribed by the Secretary; and

(2) receive notice of the final determination of the Secretary.

**(g) Information relating to prevention and control of anticompetitive activities**

On request, the Secretary shall present to the Committee on Education and Labor, and the Committee on Agriculture, of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate information regarding the activities of the Secretary relating to anticompetitive activities, fraud, nonprocurement debarment, and any waiver granted by the Secretary under this section.

(June 4, 1946, ch. 281, §25, as added Pub. L. 103-448, title I, §122(a), Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4727; amended Pub. L. 105-336, title I, §107(j)(2)(C)(ii), Oct. 31, 1998, 112 Stat. 3153.)

AMENDMENTS

1998—Subsec. (b)(1)(D) to (G). Pub. L. 105-336 redesignated subpars. (E) to (G) as (D) to (F), respectively, and struck out former subpar. (D) which read as follows: “the homeless children nutrition program established under section 1766b of this title;”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1998 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 105-336 effective July 1, 1999, see section 107(j)(4) of Pub. L. 105-336, set out as a note under section 1761 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Oct. 1, 1994, see section 401 of Pub. L. 103-448, set out as an Effective Date of 1994 Amendment note under section 1755 of this title.

Pub. L. 103-448, title I, §122(b), Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4730, provided that: “Section 25 of the [Richard B. Russell] National School Lunch Act [42 U.S.C. 1769f] (as added by subsection (a)) shall not apply to a cause for debarment as described in section 25(d)(2) of such Act that is based on an activity that took place prior to the effective date of section 25 of such Act [Oct. 1, 1994].”

NO REDUCTION IN AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE TO DEBAR OR SUSPEND A PERSON FROM FEDERAL FINANCIAL AND NONFINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND BENEFITS

Pub. L. 103-448, title I, §122(c), Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4731, provided that: “The authority of the Secretary of Agriculture that exists on the day before the date of enactment of this Act [Nov. 2, 1994] to debar or suspend a person from Federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under Federal programs and activities shall not be diminished or reduced by sub-

section (a) [enacting this section] or the amendment made by subsection (a).”

**§ 1769g. Information clearinghouse**

**(a) In general**

The Secretary shall enter into a contract with a nongovernmental organization described in subsection (b) to establish and maintain a clearinghouse to provide information to nongovernmental groups located throughout the United States that assist low-income individuals or communities regarding food assistance, self-help activities to aid individuals in becoming self-reliant, and other activities that empower low-income individuals or communities to improve the lives of low-income individuals and reduce reliance on Federal, State, or local governmental agencies for food or other assistance.

**(b) Nongovernmental organization**

The nongovernmental organization referred to in subsection (a) shall be selected on a competitive basis and shall—

(1) be experienced in the gathering of firsthand information in all the States through on-site visits to grassroots organizations in each State that fight hunger and poverty or that assist individuals in becoming self-reliant;

(2) be experienced in the establishment of a clearinghouse similar to the clearinghouse described in subsection (a);

(3) agree to contribute in-kind resources towards the establishment and maintenance of the clearinghouse and agree to provide clearinghouse information, free of charge, to the Secretary, States, counties, cities, antihunger groups, and grassroots organizations that assist individuals in becoming self-sufficient and self-reliant;

(4) be sponsored by an organization, or be an organization, that—

(A) has helped combat hunger for at least 10 years;

(B) is committed to reinvesting in the United States; and

(C) is knowledgeable regarding Federal nutrition programs;

(5) be experienced in communicating the purpose of the clearinghouse through the media, including the radio and print media, and be able to provide access to the clearinghouse information through computer or telecommunications technology, as well as through the mails; and

(6) be able to provide examples, advice, and guidance to States, counties, cities, communities, antihunger groups, and local organizations regarding means of assisting individuals and communities to reduce reliance on government programs, reduce hunger, improve nutrition, and otherwise assist low-income individuals and communities become more self-sufficient.

**(c) Audits**

The Secretary shall establish fair and reasonable auditing procedures regarding the expenditures of funds to carry out this section.

**(d) Funding**

Out of any moneys in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury

shall pay to the Secretary to provide to the organization selected under this section, to establish and maintain the information clearinghouse, \$200,000 for each of fiscal years 1995 and 1996, \$150,000 for fiscal year 1997, \$100,000 for fiscal year 1998, \$166,000 for each of fiscal years 1999 through 2004, and \$250,000 for each of fiscal years 2010 through 2022. The Secretary shall be entitled to receive the funds and shall accept the funds, without further appropriation.

(June 4, 1946, ch. 281, §26, as added Pub. L. 103-448, title I, §123, Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4731; amended Pub. L. 105-336, title I, §§103(c)(2), 112, Oct. 31, 1998, 112 Stat. 3147, 3157; Pub. L. 108-265, title I, §128, June 30, 2004, 118 Stat. 767; Pub. L. 111-80, title VII, §749(f), Oct. 21, 2009, 123 Stat. 2132; Pub. L. 111-296, title IV, §409, Dec. 13, 2010, 124 Stat. 3260; Pub. L. 114-113, div. A, title IV, Dec. 18, 2015, 129 Stat. 2266; Pub. L. 114-223, div. C, §148, as added Pub. L. 114-254, div. A, §101(3), Dec. 10, 2016, 130 Stat. 1006; Pub. L. 115-31, div. A, title IV, May 5, 2017, 131 Stat. 159; Pub. L. 115-141, div. A, title IV, Mar. 23, 2018, 132 Stat. 373; Pub. L. 116-6, div. B, title IV, Feb. 15, 2019, 133 Stat. 67; Pub. L. 116-94, div. B, title IV, Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 2635; Pub. L. 116-260, div. A, title IV, Dec. 27, 2020, 134 Stat. 1209.)

#### AMENDMENTS

2020—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 116-260 substituted “2010 through 2022” for “2010 through 2021”.

2019—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 116-94 substituted “2010 through 2021” for “2010 through 2019”.

Pub. L. 116-6 substituted “2010 through 2019” for “2010 through 2018”.

2018—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 115-141 substituted “2010 through 2018” for “2010 through 2017”.

2017—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 115-31, which directed substitution of “2010 through 2017” for “2010 through 2016” in first sentence, could not be executed because of the prior identical amendment by Pub. L. 114-223, §148. See 2016 Amendment note below.

2016—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 114-223, §148, as added by Pub. L. 114-254, §101(3), substituted “2010 through 2017” for “2010 through 2016” in first sentence.

2015—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 114-113 substituted “2010 through 2016” for “2010 through 2015” in first sentence.

2010—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 111-296 substituted “2010 through 2015” for “2005 through 2010” in first sentence.

2009—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 111-80 substituted “2010” for “2009”.

2004—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 108-265, in first sentence, substituted “1998,” for “1998, and” and “through 2004, and \$250,000 for each of fiscal years 2005 through 2009” for “through 2003”.

1998—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 105-336 substituted “\$100,000 for fiscal year 1998, and \$166,000 for each of fiscal years 1999 through 2003” for “and \$100,000 for fiscal year 1998” in first sentence and inserted “, without further appropriation” before period at end of second sentence.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2010 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 111-296 effective Oct. 1, 2010, except as otherwise specifically provided, see section 445 of Pub. L. 111-296, set out as a note under section 1751 of this title.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1998 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 105-336 effective Oct. 1, 1998, see section 401 of Pub. L. 105-336, set out as a note under section 1755 of this title.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Oct. 1, 1994, see section 401 of Pub. L. 103-448, set out as an Effective Date of 1994 Amendment note under section 1755 of this title.

### § 1769h. Repealed. Pub. L. 111-296, title IV, § 441(a)(14), Dec. 13, 2010, 124 Stat. 3264

Section, act June 4, 1946, ch. 281, §27, as added Pub. L. 103-448, title I, §124, Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4732; amended Pub. L. 105-220, title IV, §414(d), Aug. 7, 1998, 112 Stat. 1242; Pub. L. 105-336, title I, §113, Oct. 31, 1998, 112 Stat. 3157, related to accommodation of the special dietary needs of individuals with disabilities.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF REPEAL

Repeal effective Oct. 1, 2010, except as otherwise specifically provided, see section 445 of Pub. L. 111-296, set out as an Effective Date of 2010 Amendment note under section 1751 of this title.

### § 1769i. Program evaluation

#### (a) Performance assessments

##### (1) In general

Subject to the availability of funds made available under paragraph (3), the Secretary, acting through the Administrator of the Food and Nutrition Service, may conduct annual national performance assessments of the meal programs under this chapter and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq.).

##### (2) Components

In conducting an assessment, the Secretary may assess—

(A) the cost of producing meals and meal supplements under the programs described in paragraph (1); and

(B) the nutrient profile of meals, and status of menu planning practices, under the programs.

##### (3) Authorization of appropriations

There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 2004 and each subsequent fiscal year.

#### (b) Certification improvements

##### (1) In general

Subject to the availability of funds made available under paragraph (5), the Secretary, acting through the Administrator of the Food and Nutrition Service, shall conduct a study of the feasibility of improving the certification process used for the school lunch program established under this chapter.

##### (2) Pilot projects

In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary may conduct pilot projects to improve the certification process used for the school lunch program.

##### (3) Components

In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary shall examine the use of—

(A) other income reporting systems;

(B) an integrated benefit eligibility determination process managed by a single agency;

(C) income or program participation data gathered by State or local agencies; and

(D) other options determined by the Secretary.

##### (4) Waivers

###### (A) In general

Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary may waive such provisions of this chapter