

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

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To amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to establish a pilot program to award grants to school food authorities to provide 100 percent plant-based food and milk options, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. SCHIFF introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to establish a pilot program to award grants to school food authorities to provide 100 percent plant-based food and milk options, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*

2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Plant-Powered School

5 Meals Pilot Act”.

1 SEC. 2. PLANT-BASED FOODS IN SCHOOLS.

2 Section 18 of the Richard B. Russell National School
3 Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1769) is amended by inserting after
4 subsection (c) the following:

5 **“(d) PILOT PROGRAM FOR 100 PERCENT PLANT-
6 BASED FOOD OPTIONS.—**

7 **“(1) DEFINITIONS.—**In this subsection:

8 **“(A) 100 PERCENT PLANT-BASED FOOD
9 OPTION.—**The term ‘100 percent plant-based
10 food option’ means a breakfast or lunch meal
11 option or component that—

12 **“(i) includes a meat alternate as de-
13 scribed in—**

14 **“(I) section 210.10 of title 7,
15 Code of Federal Regulations (or suc-
16 cessor regulations); or**

17 **“(II) appendix A to part 210 of
18 title 7, Code of Federal Regulations
19 (or successor regulations); and**

20 **“(ii) does not contain any animal
21 product or byproduct, such as meat, poul-
22 try, honey, fish, dairy, or eggs.**

23 **“(B) BEGINNING FARMER OR RANCHER.—**

24 The term ‘beginning farmer or rancher’ has the
25 meaning given the term in section 343(a) of the

3 “(C) CERTIFIED ORGANIC FARM.—The
4 term ‘certified organic farm’ has the meaning
5 given the term in section 2103 of the Food, Ag-
6 riculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990
7 (7 U.S.C. 6502).

8 “(D) ELIGIBLE SCHOOL FOOD AUTHOR-
9 ITY.—The term ‘eligible school food authority’
10 means a school food authority that serves stu-
11 dents 50 percent or more of which are eligible
12 for free or reduced price lunch under this Act
13 or free or reduced price breakfast under section
14 4 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C.
15 1773).

16 “(E) ORGANICALLY PRODUCED.—The
17 term ‘organically produced’ has the meaning
18 given the term in section 2103 of the Food, Ag-
19 riculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990
20 (7 U.S.C. 6502).

1 “(G) PROGRAM.—The term ‘program’
2 means the pilot program established under
3 paragraph (2).

- 8 “(i) a beginning farmer or rancher;
- 9 “(ii) a veteran farmer or rancher (as
- 10 defined in section 2501(a) of the Food,
- 11 Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act
- 12 of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(a))); or
- 13 “(iii) a socially disadvantaged farmer
- 14 or rancher (as defined in that section).

15 “(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days
16 after the date of enactment of the Plant-Powered
17 School Meals Pilot Act, the Secretary shall establish
18 a pilot program to award grants to eligible school
19 food authorities to carry out the activities described
20 in paragraph (5).

22 “(A) TERM.—The term of a grant awarded
23 under the program shall be 3 years.

1 “(B) AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall award
2 grants under the program in diverse amounts to
3 the extent practicable.

4 “(4) APPLICATION.—

15 “(B) PRIORITY.—To the maximum extent
16 practicable, in awarding grants under the pro-
17 gram, the Secretary shall give priority to an eli-
18 gible school food authority that will use the
19 grant funds—

1 community partners with respect to the ac-
2 tivities described in paragraph (5);

13 “(5) USE OF FUNDS.—A grant awarded under
14 the program may be used for any of the following
15 activities:

16 “(A) To contract with qualified third par-
17 ties for professional development training for
18 food service personnel relating to serving (in-
19 cluding preparing, procuring, marketing, and
20 creating menus) 100 percent plant-based food
21 options.

22 “(B) To provide compensation to each em-
23 ployee who participates in the professional de-
24 velopment training described in subparagraph
25 (A) at the regular rate of pay of such employee.

1 “(C) To provide technical assistance and
2 student engagement and education on 100 per-
3 cent plant-based food options, including pro-
4 viding taste tests, recipe development, and cul-
5 inary education.

6 “(D) To provide compensation for addi-
7 tional work relating to serving meals that in-
8 clude a 100 percent plant-based food option.

9 “(E) To conduct outreach to, and cover
10 costs of procurement of foods from, agricultural
11 producers of 100 percent plant-based food op-
12 tions, including—

13 “(i) underserved producers;
14 “(ii) limited resource farmers or
15 ranchers (as defined by the Secretary);
16 “(iii) producers on a certified organic
17 farm; and
18 “(iv) local farmers.

19 “(6) RECORDKEEPING REQUIRED.—Each eligi-
20 ble school food authority awarded a grant under the
21 program shall keep records of the 100 percent plant-
22 based food options served, as the Secretary deter-
23 mines appropriate.

24 “(7) REPORTS.—

1 “(A) SCHOOL FOOD AUTHORITIES.—Not
2 later than 1 year after receiving a grant under
3 the program, and annually for the duration of
4 the grant term, an eligible school food authority
5 shall submit to the Secretary a report on the
6 activities carried out using the grant, including
7 information on—

8 “(i) the number of 100 percent plant-
9 based food options that the eligible school
10 food authority served during the grant pe-
11 riod compared with the preceding school
12 year;

13 “(ii) the number of schools served by
14 the eligible school food authority pursuant
15 to the grant; and

16 “(iii) the number of students served
17 by the eligible school food authority pursu-
18 ant to the grant.

19 “(B) REPORT BY SECRETARY.—With re-
20 spect to each school year during which the Sec-
21 retary receives a report under subparagraph
22 (A), the Secretary shall, not later than 1 year
23 after the date that is the last day of that school
24 year, submit to Congress a report that in-
25 cludes—

6 “(8) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary
7 shall provide technical assistance and information to
8 assist eligible school food authorities receiving grants
9 under the program—

10 “(A) to facilitate the coordination and
11 sharing of information and resources that may
12 be applicable to the activities described in para-
13 graph (5); and

14 “(B) to collect and share information on
15 best practices.

16 “(9) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
17 There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out
18 this subsection \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 2026, to
19 remain available through fiscal year 2030.”.

20 SEC. 3. ACCOMMODATING DIETARY REQUIREMENTS.

21 Section 9(a)(2) of the Richard B. Russell National
22 School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1758(a)(2)) is amended—
23 (1) in subparagraph (A)(iii)—

4 (B) by striking “or legal guardian” and in-
5 serting “legal guardian, or student”;

6 (2) by striking subparagraphs (B) and (E);

7 (3) by redesignating subparagraphs (C) and

8 (D) as subparagraphs (B) and (C), respectively; and

9 (4) by adding at the end the following:

1 nondairy beverages as substitutes
2 for fluid milk under subparagraph
3 graph (A)(ii) by the eligible
4 school food authority; and

5 “(bb) in the case of the final
6 report submitted under this sub-
7 clause, the number of such bev-
8 erages that the eligible school
9 food authority served during the
10 grant period compared with the
11 number of such beverages that
12 the eligible school food authority
13 served during the school year im-
14 mediately preceding the start of
15 the grant period.

1 “(v) SUNSET.—The authority to carry
2 out this subparagraph shall terminate on
3 the date that is 3 years after the date of
4 enactment of the Plant-Powered School
5 Meals Pilot Act.

6 “(vi) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIA-
7 TIONS.—There is authorized to be appro-
8 priated to carry out this subparagraph
9 \$2,000,000 for fiscal year 2026, to remain
10 available until the date described in clause
11 (v).

12 “(E) DEFINITION OF SPECIAL DIETARY
13 NEED.—In this paragraph, the term ‘special di-
14 etary need’ means a dietary need that does not
15 constitute a disability, including a dietary need
16 relating to religious or moral conviction.”.