
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 185 Session of
2022

INTRODUCED BY A. DAVIS, HANBIDGE, MADDEN, D. WILLIAMS, GUENST,
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DELLOSO, KRAJEWSKI, BENHAM, FITZGERALD, SHUSTERMAN,
INNAMORATO AND SANCHEZ, MARCH 22, 2022

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS,
MARCH 22, 2022

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Congress of the United States to reauthorize the
2 United States Secretary of Agriculture to issue school food
3 program waivers for the purpose of providing healthy meals to
4 millions of students across the country through the 2022-2023
5 school year.

6 WHEREAS, The Families First Coronavirus Response Act of 2020
7 authorized the United States Secretary of Agriculture to issue
8 Federal waivers for all states to provide meals through child
9 nutrition programs while maintaining appropriate safety
10 measures; and

11 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Agriculture Food and
12 Nutrition Service (FNS) recognized that state agencies and
13 school food authorities needed additional support and
14 flexibility to continue serving free and reduced-price meals to
15 children safely; and

16 WHEREAS, The regulatory waivers allowed schools to offer free
17 meals to all students without an application through the Summer
18 Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Seamless Summer Option (SSO)

1 by reimbursing free school meals at the higher summer rate
2 during the regular school year; and

3 WHEREAS, Through the SFSP, SSO and several other waivers,
4 school nutrition programs distributed grab-and-go meals at
5 drive-through pick-up sites and delivered food directly to
6 students or along bus routes; and

7 WHEREAS, Subsequent extensions of the waiver authority
8 enabled school nutrition programs to continue to safely serve
9 students over the past two years whether they were learning
10 remotely or in person; and

11 WHEREAS, Offering free meals to all students without the need
12 for an application or immediate payment sped up meal
13 distribution; and

14 WHEREAS, Economic hardships triggered by the COVID-19
15 pandemic have caused rates of food insecurity among households
16 to skyrocket; and

17 WHEREAS, Households are more likely to be food insecure if
18 they are members of a minority race or ethnicity; and

19 WHEREAS, Food insecurity has been proven to negatively impact
20 the social, emotional and behavioral development of school-age
21 children and adolescents and can increase a student's risk for
22 additional mental health issues; and

23 WHEREAS, Healthy meals provided by school nutrition programs
24 play an important role in supporting obesity prevention, overall
25 student health and academic achievement by improving diets and
26 combating hunger; and

27 WHEREAS, A survey conducted by FNS in November 2021 found
28 that:

29 (1) 92% of school food authorities reported experiencing
30 challenges due to supply chain disruptions;

1 (2) 97% of school food authorities reported challenges
2 with higher costs; and

3 (3) 95% of school food authorities reported staff
4 shortages;

5 and

6 WHEREAS, The majority of school food authorities are facing
7 limited product availability, missing or substituted items and
8 increases in the cost of packaging and equipment; and

9 WHEREAS, Continued supply chain disruptions have forced
10 school food authorities to quickly adapt their menus and meal
11 patterns; and

12 WHEREAS, The FNS waivers ensure that schools are not
13 penalized for failing to meet certain requirements due to supply
14 chain disruptions; and

15 WHEREAS, Unless reauthorized by the Congress of the United
16 States, the waivers will expire June 30, 2022; and

17 WHEREAS, School food authorities will likely need to raise
18 prices to make up for the loss of the increased reimbursement
19 and withhold free meals from millions of students; and

20 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives recognizes the critical
21 contribution that free and reduced-price meal programs make
22 toward the positive social, academic and behavioral development
23 of children and adolescents; and

24 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives recognizes that school
25 food authorities expect labor shortages, supply chain
26 disruptions and increased food costs to continue beyond June 30,
27 2022; therefore be it

28 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
29 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the United
30 States to reauthorize the United States Secretary of Agriculture

1 to issue school food program waivers for the purpose of
2 providing healthy meals to millions of students across the
3 country through the 2022-2023 school year; and be it further
4 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to
5 the presiding officers of each House of Congress and each member
6 of Congress from Pennsylvania.