
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 211 Session of
2023

INTRODUCED BY KINSEY, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, MADDEN, FREEMAN, HILL-
EVANS, KHAN, KIM, MAYES, SANCHEZ, PARKER, KINKEAD AND SMITH-
WADE-EL, SEPTEMBER 19, 2023

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2023

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a
2 study on the nutritional value of food, along with the
3 nutrition-related health of incarcerated individuals, in
4 State correctional institutions in this Commonwealth and to
5 issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the
6 House of Representatives.

7 WHEREAS, People who are incarcerated have a right to food
8 that is safe, nourishing, appealing to the senses and culturally
9 appropriate; and

10 WHEREAS, People who are incarcerated should have access to
11 food that satiates hunger and promotes physical health and
12 mental well-being; and

13 WHEREAS, People who are incarcerated should have access to
14 food that meets their individual health needs and aligns with
15 their values; and

16 WHEREAS, More than 40,000 individuals are housed in 23 State
17 correctional institutions and a motivational boot camp across
18 this Commonwealth; and

19 WHEREAS, Incarcerated individuals must depend on the

1 facilities in which they are incarcerated for their nutrition,
2 as well as their health and wellness; and

3 WHEREAS, It is stated policy of the Department of Corrections
4 that the regular master menu and various population menus will
5 be planned based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the
6 Dietary Reference Intakes; and

7 WHEREAS, For every meal, a State correctional institution in
8 this Commonwealth offers a vegetarian entree and special meals
9 to accommodate religious observances; and

10 WHEREAS, Although the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and
11 the Dietary Reference Intakes are intended to protect
12 incarcerated individuals' health in State correctional
13 institutions, food has been used as a means of punishment and is
14 currently being used for behavior modification; and

15 WHEREAS, In comparison to the general population, a higher
16 rate of incarcerated individuals report having one or more
17 chronic medical conditions, such as hypertension or diabetes;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, It is vitally important that the nutritional value
20 of food at State correctional institutions in this Commonwealth
21 be examined, as well as the health conditions of incarcerated
22 individuals to ensure that they are receiving humane treatment
23 and to bring awareness to their health needs; therefore be it

24 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the Joint
25 State Government Commission to conduct a study on the
26 nutritional value of food, along with the nutrition-related
27 health of incarcerated individuals, in State correctional
28 institutions in this Commonwealth and to issue a report of its
29 findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives;
30 and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the study include, at a minimum, the following
2 regarding State correctional institutions in this Commonwealth:

3 (1) a breakdown of the nutritional value of the food
4 served, including the percentage of carbohydrates, fat,
5 protein, minerals and vitamins in each food group;

6 (2) a breakdown of the sources of calcium, calories,
7 carbohydrates, fruits, grains, protein and vegetables in each
8 meal served;

9 (3) a breakdown of the number of calories provided for
10 each incarcerated individual over the course of three meals
11 per day;

12 (4) an analysis of the nutritional value of the planned
13 master menu, including the extent to which the menu aligns
14 with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Dietary
15 Reference Intakes;

16 (5) an analysis of the nutritional value of the food and
17 beverages made available for sale in the commissary,
18 including the amount of carbohydrates, fat, protein, minerals
19 and vitamins in each item;

20 (6) an analysis of the dietary intake of a
21 representative sample of incarcerated individuals, using a
22 24-hour dietary recall or other established method;

23 (7) an analysis of food quality and palatability in
24 relation to preferences of the incarcerated population;

25 (8) the medical and physical health of incarcerated
26 individuals; and

27 (9) the prevalence of illness and disease among
28 incarcerated individuals;

29 and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That the study assess menu options for each of the

1 following populations:

- 2 (1) general population;
- 3 (2) vegetarian population;
- 4 (3) diabetic population; and
- 5 (4) religious population;

6 and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the study include a cost-benefit analysis on
8 the following:

- 9 (1) providing additional calories on menus while
10 reducing the cost of menu items;
- 11 (2) replacing food low in nutritional value, such as
12 desserts and extra bread, with food high in nutritional
13 value, such as fruits and vegetables; and
- 14 (3) replacing high cost and low nutritional value meals
15 with lower cost and high nutritional value meals;

16 and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the study also include recommendations for
18 legislative action to:

- 19 (1) increase the nutritional value of incarcerated
20 individuals' food; and
- 21 (2) treat health conditions of incarcerated individuals
22 and take preventive measures to mitigate illness and disease
23 among incarcerated individuals;

24 and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission be
26 authorized to request information from the Department of
27 Corrections for the study; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission report
29 its findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives
30 no later than one year after the adoption of this resolution.