

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 739

To amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to expand the use of salad bars in schools.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 24, 2025

Ms. WILSON of Florida introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Workforce

A BILL

To amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to expand the use of salad bars in schools.

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 “Salad Bars in Schools
5 Expansion Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) In the United States, one-third of all school-
9 aged children are overweight or obese and very few

1 eat the daily amount of fruits and vegetables rec-
2 ommended by national health authorities.

3 (2) On average, more than 30 million children
4 participate in the National School Lunch Program
5 daily, with more than 70 percent qualifying for free
6 or reduced-price meals based on family household in-
7 come.

8 (3) Improving the healthfulness of school meals,
9 including serving more fruits and vegetables, will im-
10 prove children’s eating habits and their health. The
11 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends that
12 children “make half their plate fruits and vegeta-
13 bles” at each meal.

14 (4) Research indicates that school salad bars
15 are an effective strategy to increase children’s con-
16 sumption of a wide variety of fruits and vegetables.

17 (5) Salad bars are one of the easiest ways for
18 school food authorities to meet the new school lunch
19 nutrition standards that require serving a fruit and
20 a vegetable every day, a colorful variety of vegetables
21 every week, and that students select at least one-half
22 cup of a fruit or a vegetable at lunch.

23 (6) Salad bars are effective in elementary, mid-
24 dle, and high school, they empower students to try
25 new fruits and vegetables and are a tangible example

1 of a school’s commitment to wellness and healthier
2 school meals.

3 **SEC. 3. EXPANSION OF SALAD BARS.**

4 Section 18 of the Richard B. Russell National School
5 Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1769) is amended by adding at the
6 end the following:

7 “(1) EXPANSION OF SALAD BARS.—

8 “(1) MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS
9 PLAN.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the
10 enactment of the Salad Bars in Schools Expansion
11 Act, the Secretary shall establish and implement a
12 plan to promote the use of salad bars in schools par-
13 ticipating in the school lunch program established
14 under this Act.

15 “(2) TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—
16 In carrying out the plan described in paragraph (1),
17 the Secretary shall provide training and technical as-
18 sistance to eligible entities to assist the entities in
19 establishing salad bars in schools. Such training and
20 technical assistance may include—

21 “(A) webinars;

22 “(B) training workshops;

23 “(C) implementation resources;

24 “(D) nutrition education; and

1 “(E) strategies for parent engagement and
2 to encourage collaboration with allied organiza-
3 tions and partners.

4 “(3) GRANT PROGRAM.—

5 “(A) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the
6 plan described in paragraph (1), the Secretary
7 shall establish a grant program under which the
8 Secretary shall provide grants, on a competitive
9 basis, to eligible entities selected under sub-
10 paragraph (C).

11 “(B) USE OF FUNDS.—Each eligible entity
12 receiving a grant under this subsection shall use
13 the grant funds to award schools a one-time
14 payment equal to the anticipated cost of install-
15 ing a salad bar, including the purchase of any
16 durable equipment required for a salad bar.

17 “(C) APPLICATION.—

18 “(i) IN GENERAL.—To receive a grant
19 under this subsection, an eligible entity
20 shall submit to the Secretary an applica-
21 tion at such time, in such manner, and
22 containing such information as the Sec-
23 retary may require.

1 “(ii) PRIORITY.—In selecting grant
2 recipients, the Secretary may give priority
3 to eligible entities that—

4 “(I) serve schools in which not
5 less than 50 percent of the students
6 are eligible for free or reduced price
7 lunches;

8 “(II) serve schools in food
9 deserts; or

10 “(III) provide nutrition education
11 to students.

12 “(D) TERMINATION.—The grant program
13 shall terminate 5 years after the date of the en-
14 actment of the Salad Bars in Schools Expan-
15 sion Act.

16 “(E) EVALUATION.—Each grantee shall
17 submit to the Secretary an evaluation of the
18 grant program at such time, in such manner,
19 and containing such information as the Sec-
20 retary may require.

21 “(4) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the
22 date of the enactment of the Salad Bars in Schools
23 Expansion Act, the Secretary shall submit a report
24 to the Committee on Education and the Workforce
25 and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of

1 Representatives, and the Committee on Agriculture,
2 Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate, which in-
3 cludes—

4 “(A) recommendations, if any, for pro-
5 moting and establishing more salad bars in
6 schools;

7 “(B) the number of schools nationwide
8 that have a salad bar program in their school;

9 “(C) the number of schools that have new
10 salad bars as a result of the plan described in
11 paragraph (1); and

12 “(D) the evaluations submitted by grantees
13 under paragraph (3)(E).

14 “(5) REVISION OF GUIDANCE ON SALAD BARS
15 IN THE NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM.—Not
16 later than 90 days after submitting the report under
17 paragraph (4), the Secretary shall revise the March
18 27, 2013, policy memorandum SP 31–2013, ‘Salad
19 Bars in the National School Lunch Program’, in
20 light of any recommendations contained in the re-
21 port.

22 “(6) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

23 “(A) DURABLE EQUIPMENT.—The term
24 ‘durable equipment’ means durable food prepa-

1 ration, handling, cooking, serving, and storage
2 equipment greater than \$500 in value.

3 “(B) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligi-
4 ble entity’ means—

5 “(i) a school; or

6 “(ii) a school food authority.

7 “(C) FOOD DESERT.—The term ‘food
8 desert’ means a census tract with a substantial
9 share of residents who live in low-income areas
10 that have low levels of access to a grocery store
11 or a healthy, affordable food retail outlet.”.

12 **SEC. 4. PROHIBITION ON NEW APPROPRIATIONS.**

13 No additional funds are authorized to be appro-
14 priated to carry out this Act and the amendments made
15 by this Act, and this Act and such amendments shall be
16 carried out using amounts otherwise made available for
17 such purposes.

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