

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Agriculture

BILL: SB 1916

INTRODUCER: Senators Taddeo and Torres

SUBJECT: Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program

DATE: February 1, 2022

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Fink</u>	<u>Becker</u>	<u>AG</u>	<u>Pre-meeting</u>
2.	_____	_____	<u>ED</u>	_____
3.	_____	_____	<u>AP</u>	_____

I. Summary:

SB 1916 creates s. 1004.092, F.S., and establishes the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department). The bill shall be cited as the “Hunger-Free Campus Act.”

The bill requires the Commissioner of Agriculture (commissioner) to annually designate eligible postsecondary educational institutions (institutions) as Hunger-Free Campuses. To qualify as an eligible postsecondary educational institution, the administration must:

- Establish a hunger task force;
- Designate a staff member who shall be responsible for assisting students with enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);
- Provide options to use SNAP benefits on campus, or provide information on where SNAP can be used in the surrounding area;
- Host an activity or event during Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, to promote awareness;
- Establish a physical food pantry on campus, or a separate, stigma-free process to provide food at no cost, such as partnering with a local food bank;
- Develop a student meal credit donation program or designate funds for free food vouchers; and
- Conduct a survey on hunger annually, which shall be developed by the department, and submit the results along with a best practices campus profile to the department.

The bill also requires that the commissioner award grants on a competitive basis to educational institutions that have one or more campuses designated as a Hunger-Free Campus, subject to appropriation. The commissioner shall determine the amount of each grant, prioritizing grants made to institutions with the highest percentages of eligible Pell Grant recipients. These grants must be used for an approved purpose related to food insecurity on campus. Grant recipients

must submit a report to the department, in the manner the department prescribes, which describes how the grant awards were used.

The bill requires the department to adopt rules to implement the program and submit a report on the program to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives by July 1, 2024.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2022.

II. Present Situation:

Food insecurity is a longstanding problem in Florida, and the United States as a whole. As a group, college students are particularly vulnerable to food insecurity.¹ A 2019 survey of college students from across the country found that 39% of them were food insecure in the prior 30 days. Moreover, 46% of students reported being housing insecure, and 17% were homeless during the previous year.² Individuals that struggle economically often choose lower-cost foods that are less healthy, to manage other expenses such as housing, utilities, and medicine. This food insecurity can lead to poor physical and mental health outcomes for affected students.

While support programs exist, many students do not take advantage of them because of the stigma associated, or because they do not qualify. Students that attend college more than half-time are generally not eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).³ Further, 52% of students that faced food or housing insecurity in 2020 did not seek assistance because they simply did not know how.⁴ The COVID-19 virus has also exacerbated the food insecurity crisis on campuses for many reasons, like loss of employment and lack of access to usual dining facilities.⁵

The first Hunger-Free Campus bill was originally introduced in California in 2017 by then Assemblywoman Monique Limón.⁶ Four states have formally passed the Hunger-Free Campus Bill: California in 2017⁷; New Jersey in 2019⁸; and Maryland⁹ and Minnesota¹⁰ in 2021. Seven other states, now including Florida, have introduced the bill, including Pennsylvania, Washington, Illinois, North Carolina, New York, and West Virginia.

¹ Jacquelyn N. Heuer, “College Students Struggle with Food Insecurity,” The Hub (June 19, 2020) <https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/hub/college-students-struggle-with-food-insecurity.aspx> (last visited Feb. 1, 2022).

² *Id.*

³ U.S. Department of Agriculture, “Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program,” <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/students>

⁴ https://hope4college.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/RCSurvey_NatlOnePager_FINAL_3.22.2021.pdf (Last visited Feb. 1, 2022).

⁵ Congressional Research Service, “Food Insecurity Among College Students: Background and Policy Options,” (June 9, 2021), <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R46817> (last visited Feb. 1, 2022).

⁶ Cal. Educ. Code § 66027.8.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ N.J. Stat. Ann. § 18A:62-60.

⁹ Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 11-1703.

¹⁰ Minn. Stat. Ann. § 135A.137.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 1916 creates s. 1004.092, F.S., the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program, and titles it the “Hunger-Free Campus Act.”

The bill creates the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department). The purpose of the program is to support efforts to fight hunger on the campuses of educational institutions.

The bill requires the Commissioner of Agriculture (commissioner) to annually designate eligible public postsecondary institutions as Hunger-Free Campuses. For a campus to be able to participate in the program the administration of a public postsecondary educational institution that awards baccalaureate or higher degrees must:

- Establish a hunger task force, which includes members of the student body, and meets a minimum of three times an academic year. These task forces must set a minimum of two annual goals to address hunger on campus;
- Designate a staff member who shall be responsible for assisting students with enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);
- Provide options to use SNAP benefits on campus, or provide information on where SNAP can be used in the surrounding area;
- Host an activity or event during Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week to promote awareness of hunger on campuses;
- Establish a physical food pantry on campus, or a separate, stigma-free process to provide food at no cost, such as partnering with a local food bank;
- Develop a student meal credit donation program, or designate funds for free food vouchers; and
- Conduct a survey on hunger annually, which shall be developed by the department, and submit the results along with a best practices campus profile to the department.

The bill requires that the administration of a public postsecondary educational institution that awards degrees no higher than an associate degree must only:

- Establish a hunger task force, as above;
- Designate a staff member for assisting students with SNAP, as above;
- Host an activity or event during Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week to promote awareness of hunger on campuses;
- Establish a physical food pantry on campus, or a separate, stigma-free process to provide food at no cost, like partnering with a local food bank; and
- Conduct the department survey, and submit the results along with a best practices campus profile to the department.

The bill also requires that the commissioner shall award grants on a competitive basis to public institutions that have one or more campuses designated as a Hunger-Free Campus, subject to appropriation by the Legislature. The commissioner shall determine the amount of each grant, prioritizing grants made to institutions with the highest percentages of eligible Pell Grant recipients. The bill requires that the grants awarded must be used to:

- Address student hunger;

- Promote sustainable solutions to address basic food needs on campus;
- Raise awareness of services currently offered on campus; and
- Build partnerships at the local, state, and national levels to address food insecurity among institutions.

The bill requires the grant recipients to submit a report to the department, in the manner the department prescribes, which describes how the grant awards were used.

The bill requires the commissioner to submit a report on the program to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by July 1, 2024, detailing:

- The number and amounts of grants awarded;
- The impact of the program on establishing Hunger-Free Campuses;
- The impact of the program on reducing the number of students experiencing food insecurity; and
- Recommendations regarding funding for the program.

The bill requires the department to adopt rules to implement the program.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2022.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The bill is subject to appropriation by the Legislature.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill creates section 1004.092 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.