

FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES BILL ANALYSIS

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BILL #: [HB 1245](#)

TITLE: Hunger-Free Campus Pilot Program

SPONSOR(S): Chambliss

COMPANION BILL: [SB 980](#) (Bernard)

LINKED BILLS: None

RELATED BILLS: None

Committee References

[Education Administration](#)

16 Y, 0 N



[Housing, Agriculture & Tourism](#)



[Higher Education Budget](#)



[Education & Employment](#)

SUMMARY

Effect of the Bill:

Subject to legislative appropriation, the bill establishes a 1-year Hunger-Free Campus Pilot Program within the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), beginning July 1, 2025.

The bill requires the Commissioner of Agriculture (commissioner) to identify the top three institutions with the highest percentage of Pell Grant-eligible students among all state universities and Florida College System (FCS) institutions. Those three institutions must participate in the pilot program. The bill establishes participation requirements such as creating a hunger task force, providing access and assistance to students with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, hosting awareness events, and offering food pantries.

Under the bill, the commissioner must submit a report on the pilot program to the Governor and legislature by January 1, 2027, including its impact on student food insecurity and recommendations for long-term implementation.

Fiscal or Economic Impact:

The bill may have an indeterminate negative fiscal impact on the FDACS for developing the pilot program. Participating state universities and FCS institutions may also incur costs for implementing the program on their campuses. Funding appropriated for the program will be used to cover these costs.

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ANALYSIS

EFFECT OF THE BILL:

Subject to legislative appropriation, the bill establishes a 1-year [Hunger-Free Campus](#) Pilot Program (pilot program) within the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), beginning July 1, 2025. (Sections [1](#) and [2](#)).

The bill requires the Commissioner of Agriculture (commissioner) to identify the top three institutions with the highest percentage of Pell Grant-eligible students among all state universities and Florida College System institutions. Those three institutions must participate in the pilot program. The bill requires each participating institution to:

- establish a hunger task force;
- designate a staff member responsible for assisting students with enrollment in the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP), as defined in [s. 414.456\(1\), F.S.](#);
- provide options for students to use SNAP benefits on campus or provide students with information on where they may use SNAP benefits in the area surrounding campus;
- host an activity or event during Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week to promote awareness of hunger on the nation's campuses;

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- provide at least one physical [food pantry on campus](#) or enable students to receive food at no cost through a separate, stigma-free process;
- develop a student meal credit donation program or designate a certain amount of funds for free food vouchers; and
- conduct a student survey on hunger, using a survey instrument developed by the commissioner, and submit the results to FDACS.

The bill requires each participating state university or Florida College System (FCS) institution to submit a report to the FDACS describing how it implemented the program. By January 1, 2027, the commissioner must report on the program to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The report must include:

- The impact of the program on establishing hunger-free campuses at participating institutions;
- The impact of the program on reducing the number of students experiencing food insecurities; and
- Recommendations regarding future funding and implementation of the program on a long-term basis. (Section [2](#)).

The bill directs the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to conduct a study evaluating food insecurity on the campuses of Florida’s state universities and FCS institutions. The study must include recommendations for any changes to general law, Board of Governor’s rules and regulations, or State Board of Education rules needed to address food insecurity by December 1, 2025. (Section [3](#)).

The bill takes effect July 1, 2025. (Section [4](#)).

RULEMAKING:

The bill authorizes the FDACS to adopt rules to implement the pilot program.

Lawmaking is a legislative power; however, the Legislature may delegate a portion of such power to executive branch agencies to create rules that have the force of law. To exercise this delegated power, an agency must have a grant of rulemaking authority and a law to implement.

FISCAL OR ECONOMIC IMPACT:

STATE GOVERNMENT:

The bill may have an indeterminate negative fiscal impact on the FDACS for developing the pilot program. Participating universities may also incur costs for implementing the program on their campuses. Funding appropriated for the program will be used to cover these costs. (Section [2](#)).

RELEVANT INFORMATION

SUBJECT OVERVIEW:

Hunger on National Campuses

Food Insecurities

Approximately one-third¹ of college students and 23 percent of undergraduate students² in the United States are food insecure,³ meaning they lack access to adequate, nutritious food. Food insecurity can negatively impact a

¹ DeBate et al., *Food Insecurity, Well-being, and Academic Success among College Students: Implications for Post COVID-19 Pandemic Programming*, Ecology of Food and Nutrition (October 7, 2021), available at <https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/centers/cafsbc/documents/food-insecurity-wellbeing-and-academic-success.pdf> (last visited March 11, 2025).

² Florida College Access Network, *The Real Cost of College in Florida* (2024), available at <https://9a33652e.delivery.rocketcdn.me/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/24-FCAN-CostofAttendance-Brief-web.pdf>

³ The Hope Center, *2023-2024 Student Basic Needs Survey Report*, <https://hope.temple.edu/research/hope-center-basic-needs-survey/2023-2024-student-basic-needs-survey-report> (last visited Mar. 10, 2025).

students' health, academic performance, and likelihood of graduating.⁴ Having a low-income is the most common risk factor associated with food insecurity among college students.⁵ In Florida, more than half of the students enrolled in the FCS are low-income and first-generation.⁶

[Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#)

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's food assistance program that provides food benefits, nutrition education, and access to a healthy diet for low-income households.⁷ To be eligible for SNAP, households must have a gross monthly income at or below 130 percent of the poverty line, have a net income at or below the poverty line, and have assets below certain limits based on whether or not the household has a member aged 60 or older who has a disability.⁸ In the 2024 fiscal year, 2,969,000 Florida residents, or 13 percent of the state population, received SNAP benefits in Florida.⁹

To qualify for SNAP benefits, students must meet additional criteria beyond the basic SNAP eligibility requirements,¹⁰ such as working a paid job for a minimum of twenty hours a week. The US Government Accountability Office (GAO) estimates less than two-fifths of food insecure students meet the additional requirements to meet SNAP eligibility.¹¹ The US GAO reports that 59 percent of students potentially eligible for SNAP benefits did not report receiving benefits.¹²

[Campus Food Pantry](#)

A campus pantry is a program designed specifically to deliver food, that has not been pre-prepared, to students who are experiencing food insecurity.¹³ Most campus pantries have a designated space on campus, serve exclusively the on-campus community, and are run by staff, students, and faculty. Very few campus pantries have sizable budgets, but most employ some paid staff, often undergraduate or graduate students, and volunteers provide additional support.¹⁴ Pantries may partner with organizations in the community to keep the shelves and freezers stocked and raise donations. Mobile pantries may also directly serve students in high need of hunger-relief.¹⁵

[Hunger-Free Campuses](#)

The first Hunger-Free Campus bill was originally introduced in California in 2017 by then Assemblywoman Monique Limón to provide funding to public colleges who are addressing student hunger on campus. Since its

⁴ U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Fighting Food Insecurity Occurs at All Ages*, <https://www.gao.gov/blog/fighting-food-insecurity-occurs-all-ages-two-populations-may-get-overlooked> (last visited Mar. 10, 2025)

⁵ U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Food Insecurity*, <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-19-95> (last visited Mar. 10, 2025).

⁶ Florida Department of Education, *Affordability in the Florida College System* (December 2018), at 2, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7724/urlt/FCS18-Affordability.pdf>.

⁷ Benefits.gov, Florida Food Assistance Program (SNAP), *What is Florida Food Assistance Program (SNAP)?*, <https://www.benefits.gov/benefit/1244#:~:text=The%20United%20States%20Department%20of,nutrition%20to%20low%20income%20households> (last visited Mar. 11, 2025).

⁸ Center on Budget Policy and Priorities, *A Quick Guide to SNAP Eligibility and Benefits*, https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/a-quick-guide-to-snap-eligibility-and-benefits#_ftn5 (last visited March 14, 2025).

⁹ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, *Florida Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program* (January 21, 2025), available at https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/snap_factsheet_florida.pdf.

¹⁰ 7 C.F.R. § 273.5. See also, U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Students, Frequently Asked Questions*, <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/students> (last visited Mar. 11, 2025).

¹¹ U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Estimated Eligibility and Receipt among Food Insecure College Students* (June 24, 2024), available at <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-107074> (last visited March 14, 2025).

¹² *Id.*

¹³ College and University Food Bank Alliance, *Campus Food Pantries: Insights from a National Survey*, at 3, available at <https://cufba.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/2018-CUFBA-Report-web-2.pdf>

¹⁴ *Id.*, at 1.

¹⁵ Feeding Florida, *Mobile Pantries*, <https://www.feedingflorida.org/food-access/mobile-pantries>. Feeding Florida consists of 12-member food banks within its mobile pantry program. (last visited Mar. 14 2025).

passage in California,¹⁶ additional states have formally passed Hunger-Free Campus legislation, including Louisiana,¹⁷ Oklahoma,¹⁸ New Jersey,¹⁹ Maryland,²⁰ Minnesota,²¹ Massachusetts,²² and Washington.²³

OTHER RESOURCES:

[State University System of Florida: Campus Food Pantries \(2015\)](#)

BILL HISTORY

| COMMITTEE REFERENCE | ACTION | DATE | STAFF DIRECTOR/ POLICY CHIEF | ANALYSIS PREPARED BY |
|---|-----------|-----------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Education Administration Subcommittee | 16 Y, 0 N | 3/19/2025 | Sleap | Dixon |
| Housing, Agriculture & Tourism Subcommittee | | | | |
| Higher Education Budget Subcommittee | | | | |
| Education & Employment Committee | | | | |

¹⁶ Cal. Educ. Code § 66027.8 (2017)

¹⁷ Louisiana State Legislature (2022), HB 888, Act No. 719.

¹⁸ Oklahoma State Legislature. (2022), Hunger-Free Campus Act, H.B. 3417, 58th Legislature.

¹⁹ N.J. Stat. Ann. § 18A:62-60 (2019)

²⁰ Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 11-1703 (2021)

²¹ Minn. Stat. § 135A.137 (2021)

²² Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 15A, § 2 (2021)

²³ Wash. Rev. Code §§ 28B.92.200, 28B.92.205 (2019)