

SENATE BILL 789

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5lr2158

By: ~~Senator M. Washington~~ Senators M. Washington, Attar, Augustine, and Brooks

Introduced and read first time: January 28, 2025

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: February 24, 2025

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Higher Education – Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program – Alterations**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the Maryland Higher Education Commission to designate
4 certain private institutions of higher education as hunger-free campuses;
5 prohibiting certain private institutions of higher education from being eligible to
6 receive grant funding under the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program; ~~altering the~~
7 ~~requirement of the Governor, beginning in a certain fiscal year, to include in the~~
8 ~~annual budget bill a certain appropriation for the Program;~~ and generally relating
9 to alterations to the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

11 Article – Education

12 Section 11-1701 ~~and 11-1703 through 11-1706~~, 11-1703, 11-1705, and 11-1706

13 Annotated Code of Maryland

14 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

15 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

16 Article – Education

17 Section 11-1702 ~~and 11-1704~~

18 Annotated Code of Maryland

19 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

20 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

21 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



Article – Education

1

2 11–1701.

3 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

4 (b) “Emergency assistance” means immediate direct assistance provided by a
5 hunger–free campus to any student facing an unanticipated financial crisis or hardship.6 (c) “Hunger–free campus” means a campus of any 4–year [public] institution of
7 higher education or regional higher education center that meets the requirements of §
8 11–1703(a) of this subtitle or any 2–year [public] institution of higher education that meets
9 the requirements of § 11–1703(b) of this subtitle.

10 (d) “Program” means the Hunger–Free Campus Grant Program.

11 11–1702.

12 (a) There is a Hunger–Free Campus Grant Program.

13 (b) The purpose of the Program is to:

14 (1) Address student hunger;

15 (2) Leverage more sustainable solutions to address basic food needs on
16 campus;17 (3) Raise awareness of services currently offered on campus that address
18 basic food needs; and19 (4) Build strategic partnerships at the local, State, and national levels to
20 address food insecurity among students.

21 (c) (1) The Commission shall administer the Program.

22 (2) The Commission shall develop the form to be used for the annual
23 student survey required under § 11–1703 of this subtitle.

24 11–1703.

25 (a) The Commission shall designate as a hunger–free campus any campus of a
26 4–year [public] institution of higher education or regional higher education center that:

27 (1) Has established a hunger task force that:

28 (i) Meets at least three times per academic year; and

1 (ii) Sets at least two goals with action plans;

2 (2) Has designated a staff member responsible for:

3 (i) Assisting students in enrolling in the Supplemental Nutrition
4 Assistance Program; or

5 (ii) Connecting students with available Supplemental Nutrition
6 Assistance Program outreach partners that can assist students in enrolling in the
7 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program;

8 (3) Has designated a staff member responsible for informing students
9 participating in federal work–study programs that they are eligible for the Supplemental
10 Nutrition Assistance Program;

11 (4) (i) Provides options for students to utilize Supplemental Nutrition
12 Assistance Program benefits at campus retailers; or

13 (ii) Provides students with information on the names and locations
14 of off–campus retailers that accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits;

15 (5) Participates in an awareness day campaign activity and plans at least
16 one campus awareness event during the National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness
17 Week;

18 (6) Provides at least one food pantry on campus, or enables students in
19 need to receive food through a separate, stigma–free arrangement;

20 (7) Develops and maintains a meal–sharing program that allows students
21 to donate their unused meal plan credits to be distributed to students in need for use in
22 campus dining halls or at an on–campus food pantry, if applicable;

23 (8) Conducts a standardized annual student survey on hunger and submits
24 the results to the Commission; and

25 (9) Submits an annual report detailing its efforts to address student
26 hunger to the Commission.

27 (b) The Commission shall designate as a hunger–free campus any campus of a
28 2–year [public] institution of higher education that meets all of the requirements for
29 4–year [public] institutions of higher education or regional higher education centers
30 identified in subsection (a) of this section, with the exception of the requirements in
31 subsection (a)(4) and (7) of this section.

32 (c) (1) Each 4–year [public] institution of higher education may develop its
33 own procedures for a meal–sharing program.

1 (2) The 4-year [public] institutions of higher education shall make
2 information about the meal-sharing program publicly available, including:

3 (i) How a student may donate unused meal plan credits;

4 (ii) How a student in need may apply to receive donated meal plan
5 credits; and

6 (iii) The methodology that a 4-year [public] institution of higher
7 education uses to ensure that unused donated meal plan credits are used to purchase food
8 to support an on-campus food pantry, if applicable.

9 11-1704.

10 ~~(A) For fiscal [year 2023 and each fiscal year thereafter] YEARS 2023 THROUGH~~
11 ~~2026~~, the Governor shall include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of \$150,000
12 for the Program.

13 ~~(B) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2027 AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER, THE~~
14 ~~GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF~~
15 ~~\$250,000 FOR THE PROGRAM.~~

16 11-1705.

17 (a) (1) The Commission shall allocate grant funding to any 4-year or 2-year
18 public institution of higher education or regional higher education center that:

19 [(1)] (I) Pledges a matching contribution to be used to implement the
20 goals of the Program; and

21 [(2)] (II) Is designated as a hunger-free campus.

22 (2) NOTWITHSTANDING DESIGNATION AS A HUNGER-FREE CAMPUS
23 UNDER THIS SUBTITLE, A 4-YEAR OR 2-YEAR PRIVATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER
24 EDUCATION OR A REGIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER OPERATED BY A PRIVATE
25 NONPROFIT INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IS NOT ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE
26 GRANT FUNDING UNDER THE PROGRAM.

27 (b) The Commission shall determine the amount of each grant.

28 (c) The Commission shall incorporate into the 2026-2030 State Plan for Higher
29 Education a plan for addressing any basic needs insecurity of higher education students.

30 (d) (1) The Commission shall adopt regulations necessary to carry out the
31 requirements of this subtitle.

1 (2) The regulations adopted under this subsection shall allow grant
2 recipients to use grant funds flexibly to implement the goals of the Program, including
3 giving recipients the ability to:

- 4 (i) Support emergency assistance;
- 5 (ii) Hire staff to manage initiatives related to the Program; and
- 6 (iii) Use grant funds for operational activities related to the Program.

7 11-1706.

8 (a) Not later than 2 years after establishing the Program, the Commission shall
9 report to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article,
10 the General Assembly on the implementation of this subtitle.

11 (b) The report shall include:

- 12 (1) The number and amounts of grants awarded;
- 13 (2) The impact of the Program on establishing hunger-free campuses at
14 [public] institutions of higher education and regional higher education centers;
- 15 (3) The impact of awarded grants on reducing the number of students
16 experiencing food insecurity; and
- 17 (4) Recommendations on expanding the Program.

18 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
19 1, 2025.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.