

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6608

To amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to establish a pilot program promoting scratch cooking in school meal programs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 4, 2022

Mrs. HAYES (for herself, Ms. BROWNLEY, Mrs. MCBATH, and Mr. FITZPATRICK) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to establish a pilot program promoting scratch cooking in school meal programs.

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 “Scratch Cooked Meals
5 for Students Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. PILOT PROGRAM FOR GRANTS PROMOTING**
2 **SCRATCH COOKING IN SCHOOL MEAL PRO-**
3 **GRAMS.**

4 Section 18 of the Richard B. Russell National School
5 Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1769) is amended by inserting be-
6 fore subsection (b) the following new subsection:

7 “(a) SCRATCH COOKING PILOT PROGRAM.—

8 “(1) IN GENERAL.—

9 “(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than
10 180 days after the date of the enactment of this
11 subsection, the Secretary shall establish a pilot
12 program to award competitive grants to school
13 food authorities and local educational agencies
14 to promote scratch cooking.

15 “(B) SCRATCH COOKING DEFINED.—In
16 this subsection, the term ‘scratch cooking’
17 means the preparation of food using ingredients
18 that are unprocessed or minimally processed.

19 “(2) GRANT AMOUNTS AND DURATION.—A
20 grant awarded under this subsection shall be
21 made—

22 “(A) for a period of 2 school years; and

23 “(B) in 1 installment in the first school
24 year and 1 installment in the second school
25 year, with each such installment equal to or less
26 than \$100,000.

1 “(3) ELIGIBLE USES.—A grant awarded under
2 this subsection shall be used by a school food au-
3 thority or local educational agency to promote
4 scratch cooking, which may include—

5 “(A) promoting professional development
6 and training related to preparing, procuring,
7 advertising, serving, and creating menus of
8 meals made with scratch cooking;

9 “(B) purchasing cafeteria equipment or
10 making infrastructure modifications necessary
11 for scratch cooking;

12 “(C) employee compensation for additional
13 food preparation necessary for scratch cooking;
14 and

15 “(D) providing technical assistance, pupil
16 engagement, and education related to scratch
17 cooking, such as taste tests, recipe development,
18 and culinary education.

19 “(4) PRIORITY.—In evaluating grant applica-
20 tions under this subsection, the Secretary shall give
21 the highest priority to school food authorities and
22 local educational agencies that—

23 “(A) serve the greatest proportion of stu-
24 dents eligible for free or reduced price lunch
25 under this Act;

1 “(B) are—

2 “(i) self-operated; or

3 “(ii) provide an assurance to the Sec-
4 retary that the school food authority or
5 local educational agency will be self-oper-
6 ated on or before the date that is 1 year
7 before the last day of the grant period; and

8 “(C) either—

9 “(i) have employees who are rep-
10 resented by a collective bargaining agree-
11 ment or memorandum of understanding; or

12 “(ii) provide an assurance to the Sec-
13 retary that the school food authority or
14 local educational agency will, with respect
15 to the employees of such school food au-
16 thority or local educational agency, nego-
17 tiate a collective bargaining agreement or
18 memorandum of understanding on or be-
19 fore the date that is 1 year before the last
20 day of the grant period.

21 “(5) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

22 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
23 enter into an agreement with one or more non-
24 profit organizations to establish and carry out
25 a technical assistance and resource center to

1 provide technical assistance with respect to car-
2 rying out subparagraphs (A) through (C) of
3 paragraph (3).

4 “(B) COLLABORATION REQUIREMENT.—As
5 soon as practicable after receiving a grant
6 under this subsection, a school food authority
7 or local educational agency shall collaborate
8 with the technical assistance and resource cen-
9 ter established under subparagraph (A) to—

10 “(i) conduct a needs assessment to
11 evaluate equipment needs, equipment utili-
12 zation, procurement processes, and work-
13 force capabilities of the school food author-
14 ity or local educational agency; and

15 “(ii) based on such needs assessment,
16 establish a strategic plan to carry out the
17 grant under this subsection.

18 “(6) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Each school
19 food authority and local educational agency that re-
20 ceives a grant under this subsection shall report to
21 the Secretary at the end of the grant period—

22 “(A) the change, from the beginning of the
23 grant period, in the overall percentage of the 20
24 most expensive procurement items with whole
25 ingredients, raw ingredients, or both;

1 “(B) the change, from the beginning of the
2 grant period, in the overall percentage of pro-
3 cured food items that are locally procured;

4 “(C) the change, from the beginning of the
5 grant period, in the overall percentage of menu
6 items in a 4-week menu cycle prepared with
7 scratch cooking;

8 “(D) the change, from the beginning of the
9 grant period, in the overall percentage of pack-
10 aging that is single-serve packaging;

11 “(E) the change, from the beginning of the
12 grant period, to overall culinary, fiscal, procure-
13 ment, and management operations; and

14 “(F) the change, from the beginning of the
15 grant period, in the overall percentage of stu-
16 dents who participate in the school lunch pro-
17 gram under this Act.

18 “(7) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

19 “(A) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to
20 be appropriated to carry out this subsection
21 \$20,000,000 for the first fiscal year beginning
22 after the date of the enactment of this sub-
23 section and for each of the four subsequent fis-
24 cal years.

1 “(B) RESERVATIONS.—Of the amounts
2 made available under subparagraph (A), the
3 Secretary shall reserve—

4 “(i) not more than 15 percent for pur-
5 poses of carrying out paragraph (5), in-
6 cluding administrative expenses; and

7 “(ii) not more than 5 percent for
8 other administrative expenses of the Sec-
9 retary.”.

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