

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

FISCAL
NOTE

2025 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 245

By Senator Grady

Introduced February 12, 2025; referred
to the Committee on Education; and then to the
Committee on Finance]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article,
 2 designated §18B-22-1, §18B-22-2, §18B-22-3, and §18B-22-4, relating to creating the
 3 Hunger-Free Campus Act; providing for a short title; establishing the Hunger-Free Grant
 4 Program; providing for a legislative purpose; providing qualifications for a campus to be
 5 designated as hunger-free campus; requiring, subject to the availability of funding,
 6 Chancellor of the Higher Education Policy Commission to allocate grant funding to each
 7 institution designated as a hunger-free campus; and requiring a report to the Governor and
 8 Legislature no later than two years after the establishment of the program.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 22. HUNGER-FREE CAMPUS ACT.
§18B-22-1. Short title.

1 This article shall be known and may be cited as the Hunger-Free Campus Act.

§18B-22-2. Enactment and purpose.

1 The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission shall establish a Hunger-Free
 2 Campus Grant Program. The purpose of the program shall be to provide grants to state institutions
 3 of higher education that have one or more campuses that are designated by the Chancellor of the
 4 Higher Education Policy Commission as hunger-free campuses. The purpose of the grant funding
 5 shall be to:

- 6 (1) Address student hunger;
- 7 (2) Leverage more sustainable solutions to address basic food needs on campus;
- 8 (3) Raise awareness of services currently offered on campus which address basic food
 9 needs; and
- 10 (4) Continue to build strategic partnerships at the local, state, and national levels to
 11 address food insecurity among students.

§18B-22-3. Campus qualification.

1 In order to be designated as a hunger-free campus, the institution shall:

2 (1) Establish a Campus Hunger Task Force that meets a minimum of three times per
3 academic year to set at least two goals with action plans;

4 (2) Designate a staff member responsible for assisting students with enrollment in West
5 Virginia Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);

6 (3) Provide options for students to utilize SNAP benefits at campus stores that meet the
7 federal standards set by the Food and Nutrition Service in the United States Department of
8 Agriculture;

9 (4) Participate in an awareness day campaign activity and plan a campus awareness event
10 during the National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week;

11 (5) Provide at least one physical food pantry on campus, or enable students to receive food
12 through a separate, stigma-free arrangement;

13 (6) Develop a Swipe Out Hunger student meal credit sharing program, or designate a
14 certain amount of funds for free meal vouchers that might otherwise be raised through a Swipe Out
15 Hunger program; and

16 (7) Annually conduct a student survey on hunger, developed by the West Virginia Higher
17 Education Policy Commission, and submit the results of the survey and a best practices campus
18 profile to the Chancellor of the Higher Education Policy Commission at a time prescribed by the
19 chancellor for inclusion in a comparative profile of each campus designated as a hunger-free
20 campus. In the development of the survey, the Chancellor may utilize any existing surveys
21 designed to collect information on food insecurity among students enrolled in state institutions of
22 higher education.

23 Subject to the availability of funding, the Chancellor of the Higher Education Policy
24 Commission shall allocate grant funding to each state institution of higher education that has one
25 or more campuses designated by the chancellor as a hunger-free campus in accordance with the
26 criteria established pursuant to this article. The chancellor shall determine the amount of each
27 grant which shall be used by the institution to further address food insecurity among students

28 enrolled in the institution. Any and all grant funding shall be made from any moneys received from
29 legislative appropriations or from any other sources provided for purposes of this article.

§18B-22-4. Reporting requirement.

1 The Chancellor of the Higher Education Policy Commission shall submit a report to the
2 Governor, and to the Legislature, no later than two years after the establishment of the Hunger-
3 Free Campus Grant Program. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the number and
4 amounts of the grant awards, the impact the grant program has had on establishing additional
5 hunger-free campuses at state institutions of higher education and reducing the number of
6 students experiencing food insecurity, and recommendations on the expansion of the grant
7 program.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to create the "Hunger-Free Campus Act," which requires the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission to establish a grant program to address food insecurity among students enrolled in public institutions of higher education.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.