

HOUSE No. 1466

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Andres X. Vargas and Mindy Domb

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act establishing the hunger free campus initiative.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Andres X. Vargas</i>	<i>3rd Essex</i>	<i>1/15/2025</i>
<i>Mindy Domb</i>	<i>3rd Hampshire</i>	<i>1/15/2025</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>1/24/2025</i>
<i>Rodney M. Elliott</i>	<i>16th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/24/2025</i>
<i>Joan Meschino</i>	<i>3rd Plymouth</i>	<i>1/27/2025</i>
<i>Tara T. Hong</i>	<i>18th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/28/2025</i>
<i>Sean Reid</i>	<i>11th Essex</i>	<i>1/31/2025</i>
<i>Samantha Montaña</i>	<i>15th Suffolk</i>	<i>2/6/2025</i>
<i>Michael D. Brady</i>	<i>Second Plymouth and Norfolk</i>	<i>2/6/2025</i>
<i>Erika Uytterhoeven</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/6/2025</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>2/12/2025</i>
<i>Homar Gómez</i>	<i>2nd Hampshire</i>	<i>2/12/2025</i>
<i>Brian M. Ashe</i>	<i>2nd Hampden</i>	<i>2/12/2025</i>
<i>Manny Cruz</i>	<i>7th Essex</i>	<i>2/12/2025</i>
<i>James C. Arena-DeRosa</i>	<i>8th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/12/2025</i>
<i>James Arciero</i>	<i>2nd Middlesex</i>	<i>2/24/2025</i>
<i>Tram T. Nguyen</i>	<i>18th Essex</i>	<i>3/11/2025</i>
<i>Adrienne Pusateri Ramos</i>	<i>14th Essex</i>	<i>3/11/2025</i>

<i>Sean Garballey</i>	<i>23rd Middlesex</i>	<i>3/11/2025</i>
<i>Paul McMurtry</i>	<i>11th Norfolk</i>	<i>3/11/2025</i>
<i>Danillo A. Sena</i>	<i>37th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/18/2025</i>
<i>Natalie M. Higgins</i>	<i>4th Worcester</i>	<i>3/18/2025</i>
<i>Priscila S. Sousa</i>	<i>6th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/24/2025</i>
<i>Adrian C. Madaro</i>	<i>1st Suffolk</i>	<i>3/31/2025</i>
<i>Bruce E. Tarr</i>	<i>First Essex and Middlesex</i>	<i>4/7/2025</i>
<i>Vanna Howard</i>	<i>17th Middlesex</i>	<i>4/7/2025</i>
<i>Susannah M. Whipps</i>	<i>2nd Franklin</i>	<i>4/7/2025</i>
<i>Michelle L. Badger</i>	<i>1st Plymouth</i>	<i>4/29/2025</i>
<i>Carmine Lawrence Gentile</i>	<i>13th Middlesex</i>	<i>5/5/2025</i>
<i>Russell E. Holmes</i>	<i>6th Suffolk</i>	<i>5/14/2025</i>
<i>Richard G. Wells, Jr.</i>	<i>7th Norfolk</i>	<i>5/14/2025</i>
<i>Kenneth I. Gordon</i>	<i>21st Middlesex</i>	<i>5/14/2025</i>
<i>Tackey Chan</i>	<i>2nd Norfolk</i>	<i>6/17/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 1466

By Representatives Vargas of Haverhill and Domb of Amherst, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1466) of Andres X. Vargas, Mindy Domb and others for legislation to establish a hunger-free campus grant program. Higher Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)**

An Act establishing the hunger free campus initiative.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Chapter 15A of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following section:-

2

3 Section 46. (a) Subject to appropriation, there shall be a hunger-free campus grant
4 program managed by the department to provide grants to institutions of public higher education
5 to address student food insecurity and hunger in order to support students in completion of their
6 career and technical education at the post-secondary level with the goal of enhancing the
7 workforce of the commonwealth. This grant program shall also be available to municipally
8 administered colleges and to minority-serving institutions as defined under 20 U.S.C. 1067k (3)
9 as determined by the United States Department of Education. Funding for the grant program may
10 include, but not be limited to, appropriations from the Education and Transportation Fund
11 established in section 2BBBBBB of chapter 29.

12

13 Using funding allocated under the grant program, the department is authorized to hire a
14 director of the program who shall report to the commissioner. The director shall develop
15 guidelines and procedures governing the grant making process and the program using available
16 data pertaining to student hunger. The director may also conduct any additional surveys the
17 department deems necessary to understand gaps in addressing student food insecurity and hunger
18 eligible higher education campuses across the commonwealth.

19

20 The guidelines and procedures that govern the program shall specify any requirements
21 applicable to eligible institutions of higher education including, but not limited to: (i) whether the
22 institution has designated campus staff to interface with the department; (ii) the existence and
23 extent of any campus-level hunger awareness programs, including notification to students of
24 their rights to participate in federal and state food assistance programs; (iii) whether the
25 institution has established on-campus meal vendors to accept available federal and state nutrition
26 benefits; (iv) the existence or development of a student meal credit sharing program; (v) income
27 based standards by which grant levels are determined according to the student population at each
28 participating campus; and (vi) any other pertinent criteria as developed by the department. The
29 department shall further develop and deliver technical assistance to assist eligible institutions of
30 higher education to meet the goals of this program.

31

32 (b) Subject to appropriation, the department shall award grants to institutions that have
33 met the guidelines and procedures established by the department. Upon recommendation by the
34 director of the program, the commissioner or a designee shall determine the amount of each grant

35 which shall be used by the institution to address food insecurity among its students in accordance
36 with the program and shall establish reporting guidelines for grant recipients.

37

38 (c) Annually, not later than July 1, the department shall submit a report on the hunger-
39 free campus grant program for the preceding fiscal year to the governor, the clerks of the senate
40 and house of representatives and the joint committee on higher education. The report shall
41 include the number and amounts of grants to eligible institutions well as a comprehensive
42 assessment of the program for the applicable year, including: (i) identifying the institutions
43 participating in the program; (ii) describing the activities of participating campuses; (iii) the level
44 of student engagement in activities; and (iv) the outcomes resulting from activities.

45 (d) There shall be established and set up on the books of the commonwealth a separate
46 fund to be known as the Hunger-Free Campus Trust Fund administered by the commissioner of
47 higher education. The fund shall be credited with: (i) revenue from appropriations or other
48 money authorized by the general court and specifically designated to be credited to the fund; (ii)
49 interest earned on such revenues; and (iii) funds from public and private sources such as gifts,
50 grants and donations. Amounts credited to the fund shall not be subject to further appropriation
51 and any money remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the General
52 Fund. Amounts credited to the fund shall be used to fund grants made pursuant to the program,
53 and for the cost of administration of such program by the department of higher education.

54

55 (e) Annually, not later than October 1, the commissioner shall report to the clerks of the
56 senate and house of representatives, the joint committee on higher education and the house and

57 senate committees on ways and means on the fund's activity including: (i) the source and amount
58 of funds received; (ii) the amounts distributed and the purpose of expenditures from the fund;
59 (iii) any grants provided to institutions of higher education and other stakeholder organizations;
60 and (iv) anticipated revenue and expenditure projections for the next year.