

SENATE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Joan B. Lovely

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:

Joan B. Lovely

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Second Essex

SENATE No.

[Pin Slip]

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 4453 OF 2023-2024.]

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

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

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

28 (b) Subject to appropriation, the department shall award grants to institutions that have
29 met the guidelines and procedures established by the department. Upon recommendation by the
30 director of the program, the

31 commissioner or a designee shall determine the amount of each grant which shall be used
32 by the institution to address food insecurity among its students in accordance with the program
33 and shall establish reporting guidelines for grant recipients.

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

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

50 (e) Annually, not later than October 1, the commissioner shall report to the clerks of the
51 senate and house of representatives, the joint committee on higher education and the house and
52 senate committees on ways and means on the fund's activity including: (i) the source and amount

- 53 of funds received; (ii) the amounts distributed and the purpose of expenditures from the fund;
- 54 (iii) any grants provided to institutions of higher education and other stakeholder organizations;
- 55 and (iv) anticipated revenue and expenditure projections for the next year.