

**Joint Committee on Higher Education Bill
Summary**

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	S.939
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act establishing the hunger-free campus initiative
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Senator Lovely
<u>SIMILAR MATTERS</u>	H.1466
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	S.757 and H.1233 of the 2019/2020 legislative session were favorably reported by the Joint Committee on Higher Education; sent to Senate Ways and Means and House Ways and Means; no further action. S.847 of the 2021/2022 legislative session was redrafted by the Joint Committee on Higher Education, see S.2811. S.2811 was referred to Senate Ways and Means; no further action. H.1350 of the 2021/2022 legislative session was redrafted by the Joint Committee on Higher Education, see H.4697. H.4697 was referred to House Ways and Means; no further action. S.835 and H.1293 of the 2023/2024 Legislative Session were given a favorable report with a redraft by the Joint Committee on Higher Education (see H.4453); H.4453 was sent to House Ways and Means; no further action.

SUMMARY

This bill codifies the Hunger-Free Campus grant program and establishes a Hunger-Free Campus Trust fund, administered and managed by the Department of Higher Education. The program will fund initiatives and efforts to address food insecurity and hunger in order to support students.

SECTION-BY-SECTION

Inserts section 46 into Chapter 15A

(a) Establishes a hunger-free campus grant program, managed by DHE, available to post-secondary institutions to support students in completion of their education by addressing food insecurity and hunger. The program may receive funding from the Education and Transportation Fund (fair share funding).

- DHE may use funding allocated under the grant program to hire a director of the grant program to develop guidelines, procedures, and surveys necessary for the grant-making process and to understand gaps in food security.
- Guidelines/requirements that govern institutional eligibility for the grant program shall

include:

- Whether the campus has staff available to interface with the department
 - Whether the campus has existing hunger awareness programs for students regarding their right to food assistance benefits
 - Whether the campus has on-campus meal vendors accepting food assistance benefits
 - Whether the campus has a student meal credit sharing programs
 - Income-based standards by student population for determining grant distribution amounts
 - Other criteria as deemed necessary
- DHE shall develop and deliver technical assistance for institutions to meet the goals of this program.
- (b) The commissioner shall determine grant amounts and reporting guidelines for recipients.
- (c) The commissioner shall submit an annual report to state leadership including the number of institutions and students participating, the activities of participating campuses, and any outcomes.
- (d) Establishes a Hunger-Free Campus Trust Fund, administered by DHE, to fund the grants and the program as a whole.
- (e) The commissioner shall submit an annual report to the Legislature on the amount of funds received and distributed from the fund, all grants provided, and anticipated revenue and projections for the next year.