



POLICY ALERT

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TWO CHANCES TO SUPPORT BETTER NUTRITION FOR TEXANS:

CSHB 2629 – Increases Access to Fresh Produce in Low-Income Neighborhoods

CSHB 454 – Helps Schools Expand Breakfast Programs

The committee substitutes for House Bills 2629 (Senate companion: SB 1497 by Zaffirini) and House Bill 454 by Representative Eddie Rodriguez would improve the nutrition of low-income Texans. On April 17, CSHB 2629 has a hearing in the House Agriculture and Livestock Committee and CSHB 454 will be heard by the House Public Education Committee. Please contact the members of these committees and urge their support for these bills. For contact information, go to <http://www.house.state.tx.us/committees/>

CSHB 2629 (House Agriculture and Livestock Committee – Tuesday April 17, 8:00 am)

- Establishes a small grants pilot program at the Department of Agriculture to test an innovative approach to increase access to fresh produce in low-income neighborhoods

Many low-income neighborhoods rely on small corner stores for their grocery needs, but these stores usually cannot stock an adequate variety of fresh produce. Residents of these low-income neighborhoods often lack adequate transportation to shop at larger grocery stores that are farther away. This bill would create a grants program to help small grocers in low-income neighborhoods stock more fresh produce by assisting with the cost of refrigeration units and providing technical and marketing assistance. By increasing access to fresh produce in low-income neighborhoods, CSHB 2629 would improve the nutrition of residents and reduce their risk for diet-related diseases.

CSHB 454 (House Public Education Committee – Tuesday April 17, 8:00 am)

- Directs the Department of Agriculture to compile best practices on school breakfast expansion and help school districts determine the cost-benefit of free breakfast programs

Students who eat breakfast at school concentrate better, have fewer behavioral problems, and have higher test scores. Yet, only 50% of children eligible to participate in this federally funded program eat breakfast at school. This bill directs the Department of Agriculture to study ways to increase school breakfast participation in low-income school districts. The bill would require the Department of Agriculture to 1) study the cost-effectiveness providing free meals to all students or to all low-income students; 2) identify best practices in Texas and other states for expanding school breakfast programs; and 3) make recommendations to the Legislature for increasing participation.

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