

111TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. RES. 1655

Expressing support for designation of October as “National Farm to School Month”.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 23, 2010

Mr. HOLT (for himself, Ms. McCOLLUM, and Mr. BLUMENAUER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for designation of October as “National Farm to School Month”.

Whereas Farm to School programs of varying scale are currently operational in over 8,900 schools in all 50 States;

Whereas Farm to School programs connect schools and local farms in order to serve healthier meals in school cafeterias, improve student nutrition, and provide agriculture, health, and nutrition education;

Whereas Farm to School programs often have experiential education components that can lead to permanent improvements in children’s diets both in school and at home;

Whereas Farm to School programs facilitate the purchase of local food for school meals, thus increasing local farm sales and stimulating local economies;

Whereas Farm to School programs can benefit small and mid-sized agricultural producers by providing access to consistent markets and the planning and organization skills to expand to other institutional customers;

Whereas Farm to School programs can be particularly important for beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers as schools provide a consistent and secure customer base;

Whereas Farm to School programs can benefit local economies, for every \$1 spent on local foods in schools, \$1 to \$3 circulate in the local economy;

Whereas one-third of children in the United States are now obese or overweight, and over the past 3 decades, obesity rates have quadrupled in 6- to 11-year-olds and tripled in 12- to 19-year-olds according to the most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Health and Nutrition Examination survey;

Whereas more than 9,000,000 young adults (25 percent) are too overweight to join the United States Armed Forces, making children's obesity rates a matter of national security;

Whereas United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) data shows that only 2 percent of children meet the Food Guide Pyramid serving recommendations;

Whereas communities with high levels of poverty have less access to fresh fruits and vegetables than higher-income communities;

Whereas increased consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables is 1 of 6 major strategies to prevent and control obesity,

according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

Whereas Farm to School programs can increase children's daily intake of fresh fruits and vegetables and studies have demonstrated that children in schools with an active Farm to School program increased their average consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables by 1 or more servings per day;

Whereas 31,000,000 children eat school food 5 days a week, 180 days a year, and for many of these children, school food programs provide more than half of their daily calories;

Whereas approximately 60 percent of students in the United States are eligible to receive free or reduced-price school lunches;

Whereas Farm to School programs are popular among children and can increase school lunch participation ranging from 3 percent to 16 percent for all meals;

Whereas the National School Lunch Program established under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act has potential to provide fresher and healthier foods to millions of children in the United States;

Whereas Farm to School programs decrease the distance food travels to schools, which can reduce the energy used in transportation; and

Whereas the month of October would be an appropriate month to designate as "National Farm to School Month": Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That—

1 (1) it is the sense of the House of Representa-
2 tives that—

3 (A) Farm to School programs should be
4 recognized as a proven effective strategy that
5 can provide immediate and long-term benefits
6 to child health, small and medium-sized agricul-
7 tural producer income, and community eco-
8 nomic development; and

9 (B) the Federal Government should part-
10 ner in assisting schools and local educational
11 agencies with planning, technical assistance,
12 and implementation of Farm to School pro-
13 grams; and

14 (2) the House of Representatives—

15 (A) expresses support for designation of
16 “National Farm to School Month”;

17 (B) encourages schools and local education
18 agencies to use local produce in meals; and

19 (C) encourages schools, farmers and farm
20 groups, local businesses, nonprofit institutions,
21 churches, cities, State governments, and other
22 local groups to raise awareness of Farm to
23 School efforts in their communities.

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