

119TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 9581

To establish a pilot program in the Department of Agriculture providing certain households with a monthly payment to purchase produce, to study the effect of such payments, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 2, 2026

Ms. JAYAPAL (for herself, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. DELUZIO, Mr. FIGURES, Mrs. HAYES, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SALINAS, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mr. THANEDAR) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To establish a pilot program in the Department of Agriculture providing certain households with a monthly payment to purchase produce, to study the effect of such payments, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Fresh Bucks for Fresh
5 Produce Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FRESH BUCKS PILOT PROGRAM.**

2 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Agriculture
3 shall establish and implement a program, to be known as
4 the Fresh Bucks Pilot Program, to award grants to States
5 for the purpose of providing monthly payments to connect
6 households with produce in their communities.

7 (b) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive a grant
8 under this section, a State shall submit to the Secretary
9 an application at such time, in such manner, and con-
10 taining such information as the Secretary may require. At
11 minimum, the application shall include a plan by the State
12 to reach low-access areas and expand retailer participation
13 (such as through the use of mobile markets, delivery mod-
14 els, and partnerships with community organizations or
15 clinics).

16 (c) SELECTION.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish
18 and make publicly available a description of the cri-
19 teria that the Secretary will use in evaluating appli-
20 cations submitted under subsection (b).

21 (2) PREFERENCE.—In awarding grants under
22 this section, the Secretary shall give preference to
23 applications that prioritize food insecure commu-
24 nities.

25 (3) GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY.—In awarding
26 grants under this section, the Secretary shall ensure

1 that a grant is awarded to at least 1 State in each
2 of the following regions:

3 (A) The Pacific Northwest region.

4 (B) The Northeast region.

5 (C) The Western region.

6 (D) The Midwest region.

7 (E) The Southern region.

8 (d) USE OF FUNDS.—A State receiving a grant under
9 this section may only use the grant to establish and imple-
10 ment a program (in this section referred to as a “State
11 program”) to make the monthly payments described in
12 subsection (f), including—

13 (1) associated administrative costs, such as—

14 (A) hiring staff;

15 (B) coordinating with community-based or-
16 ganizations;

17 (C) contracting with electronic benefits
18 transfer card providers;

19 (D) acquiring and using necessary tech-
20 nology systems (such as card processors); and

21 (E) marketing and participant materials
22 that are culturally relevant, plain-language, and
23 offered in multiple languages;

1 (2) providing technical and implementation as-
2 sistance (including in the form of financial assist-
3 ance) to eligible retailers; and

4 (3) collecting and reporting to the Secretary the
5 data described in subsection (h)(2).

6 (e) COMPONENTS OF STATE PROGRAMS.—In admin-
7 istering a State program, a State, in consultation with the
8 Secretary, shall develop and implement the following:

9 (1) Household eligibility guidelines for the re-
10 ceipt from the State of the monthly payments de-
11 scribed in subsection (f), which shall require that—

12 (A) in order to receive a payment from the
13 State under the State program, a household
14 shall submit to the State an application;

15 (B) only 1 such application may be sub-
16 mitted per household; and

17 (C) a household is eligible to submit such
18 an application only if the household makes 80
19 percent or less of the area median income (as
20 determined by the Secretary, in consultation
21 with the Secretary of Housing and Urban De-
22 velopment).

23 (2) Households receiving benefits under the
24 SNAP program shall be deemed to meet the income

1 requirement described in paragraph (1)(C). A State
2 shall—

3 (A) incorporate an opt-in or auto-enroll-
4 ment mechanism with respect to such house-
5 holds; and

6 (B) minimize the amount of additional pa-
7 perwork required for such households.

8 (3) An application for the receipt from the
9 State of the monthly payments described in sub-
10 section (f) that is short, low-barrier, and mobile-
11 friendly.

12 (4) The avoidance of duplicative verification
13 where States already have income data (such as
14 through the SNAP program, Medicaid, or child care
15 subsidies programs).

16 (5) Strong guardrails to reduce churn, includ-
17 ing establishing clear timelines, simple renewal,
18 grace periods, and strong customer support.

19 (6) The use of electronic benefits transfer card
20 technology for the disbursement of the monthly pay-
21 ments described in subsection (f).

22 (7) The provision of technical assistance to eli-
23 gible retailers.

24 (f) MONTHLY PAYMENTS TO HOUSEHOLDS.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—In administering a State
2 program, a State shall make payments to eligible
3 households, on a recurring monthly basis, to pur-
4 chase qualifying food from eligible retailers.

5 (2) AMOUNT; DURATION.—A payment under
6 this subsection shall be \$60 and may only be used
7 during a 30-day period.

8 (3) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—A payment
9 under this subsection shall supplement, not sup-
10 plant, other benefits received by eligible households.

11 (4) METHODS OF PAYMENTS.—In making pay-
12 ments under this subsection, a State may use exist-
13 ing disbursement methods for other programs (such
14 as an electronic benefits transfer card).

15 (g) CONSULTATION WITH LOCAL GROUPS.—In ad-
16 ministering a grant under this section, a State shall work
17 in consultation with local community-based organizations
18 and health clinics to reach households most impacted by
19 food insecurity.

20 (h) STUDY AND REPORT.—

21 (1) STUDY.—The Secretary shall conduct a
22 study to assess the effectiveness and outcomes of the
23 Fresh Bucks Pilot Program.

24 (2) DATA.—In conducting the study under
25 paragraph (1), the Secretary shall collect from

1 States receiving grants under this section the fol-
2 lowing data with respect to eligible households re-
3 ceiving payments:

4 (A) Average household size, income, and
5 other demographics.

6 (B) Average amount of payments used per
7 month.

8 (C) Household food security before and
9 after participation.

10 (D) Daily fruit and vegetable consumption.

11 (E) Where households spent payments.

12 (F) Barriers to access, such as—

13 (i) distance to eligible retailers;

14 (ii) transportation constraints;

15 (iii) eligible retailer density and hours;

16 and

17 (iv) the availability and price of quali-
18 fying foods.

19 (G) Number of eligible households on a
20 waitlist to receive payments.

21 (H) Such other data as the Secretary de-
22 termines appropriate.

23 (3) INITIAL REPORT.—Not earlier than 6
24 months after the date of enactment of this Act, but
25 not later than 12 months after such date of enact-

1 ment, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a re-
2 port that describes the initial results of the study
3 under paragraph (1).

4 (4) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 5 years
5 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Sec-
6 retary shall submit to Congress a report that de-
7 scribes the final results of the study under para-
8 graph (1). Such report shall include a recommenda-
9 tion regarding the feasibility of continuing the Fresh
10 Bucks Pilot Program and expanding the number of
11 participating States or the amount of monthly pay-
12 ments.

13 (i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

14 (1) ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLD.—The term “eligible
15 household” means a household that meets the in-
16 come requirement described in subsection (e)(1)(C).

17 (2) ELIGIBLE RETAILER.—The term “eligible
18 retailer” means—

19 (A) a farmers market;

20 (B) an independent grocer;

21 (C) a farm stand;

22 (D) a supermarket; and

23 (E) such other retailers as the Secretary
24 determines appropriate.

25 (3) HOUSEHOLD.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “household”
2 means a group of 1 or more individuals living
3 together who customarily purchase food and
4 prepare meals for consumption together at
5 home.

6 (B) SPECIAL RULE.—For the purposes of
7 this paragraph, an individual who has not at-
8 tained the age of 18 and who is attending an
9 institution of higher education (as defined in
10 section 101 of the Higher Education Act of
11 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)) shall be deemed to be
12 part of the household of the individual’s parents
13 or caregivers.

14 (4) QUALIFYING FOOD.—The term “qualifying
15 food” means—

16 (A) any fresh, frozen, or dried fruit or veg-
17 etable with no added fat, sugar, or salt;

18 (B) an herb; and

19 (C) a plant start that grows a food de-
20 scribed in subparagraph (A).

21 (5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
22 the Secretary of Agriculture.

23 (6) SNAP PROGRAM.—The term “SNAP pro-
24 gram” means the supplemental nutrition assistance

1 program under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
2 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.).

3 (7) STATE.—The term “State” means each of
4 the several States, the District of Columbia, and the
5 territories and possessions of the United States.

6 (j) TERMINATION.—The Fresh Bucks Pilot Program
7 shall terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date
8 of enactment of this Act.

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