

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6187

To allow the Secretary of Agriculture to grant certain waivers under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to address school closures due to COVID–19, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 11, 2020

Ms. OMAR (for herself, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. MORELLE, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. TRONE, Mr. SABLAN, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. WILD, Mr. LEVIN of Michigan, Ms. SCHRIER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. ADAMS, Mrs. HAYES, Ms. PRESSLEY, and Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To allow the Secretary of Agriculture to grant certain waivers under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to address school closures due to COVID–19, 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 “Maintaining Essential
5 Access to Lunch for Students Act” or the “MEALS Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. WAIVER EXCEPTION FOR SCHOOL CLOSURES DUE**
2 **TO COVID-19.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The requirements under section
4 12(l)(1)(A)(iii) of the Richard B. Russell National School
5 Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1760(l)(1)(A)(iii)) shall not apply
6 to a qualified COVID-19 waiver.

7 (b) ALLOWABLE INCREASE IN FEDERAL COSTS.—
8 Notwithstanding paragraph (4) of section 12(l) of the
9 Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C.
10 1760(l)), the Secretary of Agriculture may grant a quali-
11 fied COVID-19 waiver that increases Federal costs.

12 (c) TERMINATION AFTER PERIODIC REVIEW.—The
13 requirements under section 12(l)(5) of the Richard B.
14 Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1760(l)(5))
15 shall not apply to a qualified COVID-19 waiver.

16 (d) QUALIFIED COVID-19 WAIVER.—In this sec-
17 tion, the term “qualified COVID-19 waiver” means a
18 waiver—

19 (1) requested by a State (as defined in section
20 12(d)(8) of the Richard B. Russell National School
21 Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1760(d)(8))) or eligible serv-
22 ice provider under section 12(l) of the Richard B.
23 Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C.
24 1760(l)); and

25 (2) to waive any requirement under such Act
26 (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) or the Child Nutrition Act

1 of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq.), or any regulation
2 issued under either such Act, for purposes of pro-
3 viding meals and meal supplements under such Acts
4 during a school closure due to COVID–19.

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