

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2017

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SENATE BILL DRS55098-MM-140A

Short Title: Small Farms to Healthier Schools Initiative. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Smith, Woodard, and Waddell (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE SMALL FARMS TO HEALTHIER  
3 SCHOOLS INITIATIVE, A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOL NUTRITION  
4 PROGRAMS AND LOCAL FARMERS.

5 Whereas, overweight children are at greater risk for numerous adverse health  
6 consequences, including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, high  
7 cholesterol, certain cancers, asthma, low self-esteem, depression, and other debilitating diseases;  
8 and

9 Whereas, in North Carolina, over 31% of children were considered overweight or  
10 obese, and obese children are at least twice as likely as non-obese children to become obese  
11 adults; and

12 Whereas, the medical costs of obesity are rising rapidly in the United States and are  
13 estimated to be \$147 billion per year, with roughly half of these obesity-related costs paid by  
14 Medicare and Medicaid, indicating taxpayers bear the majority of the cost for obesity-related  
15 medical care; and

16 Whereas, many American children, particularly those in low-income neighborhoods,  
17 rural areas, and communities of color, live in communities that lack adequate access to stores  
18 selling nutritious foods; and

19 Whereas, in these neighborhoods, the school nutrition program often provides the  
20 only source of healthier foods for these children; and

21 Whereas, though North Carolina's school districts spend approximately \$285 million  
22 annually on purchases of food, small farmers struggle to access this market for their products,  
23 accounting for less than 1% of those purchases; Now, therefore,

24 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

25 **SECTION 1.(a)** The sum of three hundred forty thousand dollars (\$340,000) in  
26 nonrecurring funds for the 2018-2019 fiscal year are appropriated from the General Fund to  
27 Working Landscapes, a nonprofit organization based in Warren County, for a pilot program to  
28 reimburse participating school districts based on the servings of food they source from farms  
29 within the same region. The pilot project will take place in the educational district for the North  
30 Central region as provided in G.S. 143B-28.1 (Chatham, Durham, Edgecombe, Franklin,  
31 Granville, Harnett, Johnston, Lee, Nash, Orange, Person, Vance, Wake, Warren, and Wilson  
32 Counties).

33 **SECTION 1.(b)** Of the funds appropriated by this act, sixty thousand dollars  
34 (\$60,000) in the 2018-2019 fiscal year shall be used for payments to participating school systems  
35 to offset the higher cost of locally grown products. The remaining funds in each fiscal year shall  
36 be cost-shared on a one-to-one basis with funds provided by Working Landscapes and shall be



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- 1 used to establish program infrastructure and assist local farms in obtaining certifications  
2 necessary to supply school nutrition programs.  
3 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2018.