
DIGEST

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HB 1222 Original

2026 Regular Session

Lyons

Abstract: Provides relative to grocery initiative grants and financial support.

Proposed law defines "department", "food desert", "grocery store", "local government unit", "not-for-profit corporation", "rural tract", and "urban tract".

Proposed law requires Louisiana Economic Development (LED), subject to appropriation, to establish the Grocery Initiative in order to expand access to healthy foods in food deserts and areas at risk of becoming food deserts by providing grants or other financial assistance to grocery stores specified in proposed law.

Proposed law allows LED to enter into contracts, grants, or other agreements to administer any grants or other forms of financial assistance and to place any necessary limitation on the monetary amount of the grants and financial assistance.

Proposed law allows LED to prioritize grant awards and loan funding to applicants based on certain factors listed in proposed law. Proposed law also allows LED to award grants or provide loans for any of the following:

- (1) Market and site feasibility studies, promotional materials, and marketing.
- (2) Salaries and benefits for workers.
- (3) Rent or a down payment to acquire a facility.
- (4) Purchase of ownership of a grocery store as part of establishing a new grocery store.
- (5) Capital improvements, planning, renovations, land acquisition, demolition, and durable and non-durable equipment purchases.
- (6) Other costs as determined eligible by LED.

Proposed law allows LED, subject to appropriation, to provide grants for equipment upgrades for grocery stores specified in proposed law. Proposed law limits such an expenditure to no more than 20% of total program funding and to equipment that is energy efficient.

Proposed law provides that nothing in proposed law prevents a grocery store from receiving funds,

grants, or other financial support from entities other than LED for reasons outlined in proposed law, equipment upgrades, or technical assistance to help expand access to health food options in food deserts.

Proposed law requires LED, subject to appropriation, to provide technical assistance to grantees and other small, independently owned grocery stores to ensure their long-term viability and business success.

Proposed law provides that technical assistance, online resources, and materials provided shall include but is not limited to business planning, marketing, financing, supply chain management, and workforce development assistance.

Proposed law requires LED, subject to appropriation, to study food insecurities in urban and rural food deserts.

Proposed law provides for what may be included in this study and requires a report of this study to be submitted to the legislature by December 31, 2027.

(Adds R.S. 51:3301-3304)