

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 41

BY SENATOR GALLOT

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to develop tastier food options for the National School Lunch Program.

WHEREAS, the National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in over 100,000 public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions; and

WHEREAS, the program provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to more than thirty-one million children each school day; and

WHEREAS, school districts and independent schools that choose to take part in the lunch program get cash subsidies and USDA foods for each meal and must serve lunches that meet federal requirements; and

WHEREAS, in 2010 Congress passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act with the goal of reducing soaring rates of childhood obesity through new nutrition standards for schools, including more fruits and vegetables and less meat and grains; and

WHEREAS, since the standards went into effect in the 2011-2012 school year, participation in the program has declined despite a jump in the number of students receiving free meals; and

WHEREAS, according to a recent U.S. Government Accountability Office report, local and state authorities told researchers the new standards have resulted in more waste, higher food costs, challenges with menu planning and difficulties in sourcing products that meet the federal portion and calorie requirements; and

WHEREAS, a major reason for the problems surrounding the new guidelines is a growing lack of interest in the lunch program among students who believe that the meals are not as tasty as the previous offerings; and

WHEREAS, the long-term benefits of the program far outweigh any of the initial setbacks by improving the school nutrition for millions of children; and

WHEREAS, taste-testing feedback and increased student involvement in menu planning will enable children to develop an appreciation for finding creative ways to make menus tastier and healthier; and

WHEREAS, student participation will grow as students develop a taste for fruits and vegetables and feel involved in the process of their menu selection; and

WHEREAS, farm visits, school gardens, taste tests, cooking competitions and experiments are also fun ways to educate and excite students about eating healthier foods in school; and

WHEREAS, improvements to the National School Lunch Program are an important step in getting communities, school districts and students excited about healthier menu options.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the United States Department of Agriculture to develop tastier food options for the National School Lunch Program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the United States Department of Agriculture.

---

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

---

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES