

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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SENATE BILL 787

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

Sponsors: Senators Smith, Woodard, Waddell (Primary Sponsors); Foushee and J. Jackson.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

May 31, 2018

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE SMALL FARMS TO HEALTHIER SCHOOLS INITIATIVE, A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS AND LOCAL FARMERS.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

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



- 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.