
Health Care Committee

HB 2760

Brief Description: Providing for healthy foods for school children.

Sponsors: Representatives Schual-Berke, McDonald, Cody, Morrell, Tom, Darneille, Santos, Kagi, Benson, Simpson, G., Dickerson, Romero, Chase and Rockefeller.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Limits the types of beverages and competitive foods that may be sold in elementary schools, middle schools, and junior high schools.

Hearing Date: 1/29/04

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

The United States Department of Agriculture administers the National School Lunch Program (program). The program provides low-cost or free lunches to students in grades K-12. Participating school districts are given cash subsidies for the meals they serve as long as eligible children receive reduced price or free meals and the meals meet federal nutritional requirements. These requirements are based on the "Dietary Guidelines for Americans." These standards require that no more than 30 percent of calories come from fat and 10 percent of calories from saturated fat. The meals must also provide the student with one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances for protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium, and calories.

The regulations for the program place limitations on the sale of foods that compete with the program's meals in food service areas during mealtimes. The program prohibits the sale of "food of minimal nutritional value" in school cafeterias during mealtimes. These foods are primarily soda waters and various types of candies. States and school districts may permit the sale of other competitive foods in the cafeteria during lunch periods, as long as the income from these sales goes to the non-profit school food service, the school, or student organizations.

Summary of Bill:

In elementary schools, middle schools and junior high schools, competitive foods may not have: more than 30 percent fat, 10 percent saturated fat, and 35 percent weight from sugar unless it is a fruit or vegetable. During regular school hours and federally-funded meal programs the only drinks that may be sold to students are water; non-fat or low-fat cow milk, soy milk, and rice milk; and one-hundred percent fruit juice. These drinks may not have more than 10 milligrams of

caffeine per serving and serving sizes are limited to 12 ounces. Foods of minimal nutritional value, as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), are prohibited.

The standards do not apply to food brought into school for holidays, special occasions, or class parties.

Teachers are encouraged not to use food as a reward for student behavior or academic performance.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is required to test compliance during regular reviews required by the USDA. School districts that are found not to be in compliance must submit a plan of correction to OSPI and implement it within six months.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 20, 2004.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.