

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to establish a summer meal delivery vehicle pilot program, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. WYDEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to establish a summer meal delivery vehicle pilot program, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Feeding Our Rural
5 Kids Act of 2026” or the “FORK Act of 2026”.

1 **SEC. 2. SUMMER MEAL DELIVERY VEHICLE PILOT PRO-**
2 **GRAM.**

3 Section 13(a) of the Richard B. Russell National
4 School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1761(a)) is amended by add-
5 ing at the end the following:

6 “(14) SUMMER MEAL DELIVERY VEHICLE PILOT
7 PROGRAM.—

8 “(A) DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—

9 In this paragraph, the term ‘eligible entity’
10 means a service institution.

11 “(B) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary
12 shall establish a pilot program (referred to in
13 this paragraph as the ‘pilot program’), to be
14 carried out beginning with the first summer fol-
15 lowing the date that is 180 days after the date
16 of enactment of this paragraph, to award
17 grants to eligible entities to purchase, retrofit,
18 or repair vehicles to facilitate the distribution of
19 noncongregate meals made available pursuant
20 to this section.

21 “(C) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants
22 under the pilot program, the Secretary shall
23 give priority to eligible entities located in—

24 “(i) an area in which poor economic
25 conditions exist;

1 “(ii) an area outside a core-based sta-
2 tistical area (as defined in section 4 of the
3 MAPS Act of 2021 (31 U.S.C. 6102 note;
4 Public Law 117–219)); and

5 “(iii) an area that serves a high pro-
6 portion of students from socially disadvan-
7 tagged backgrounds.

8 “(D) LOCATIONS.—In awarding grants
9 under the pilot program, the Secretary shall en-
10 sure, to the maximum extent practicable, that
11 eligible entities receiving grants are located in
12 different States.

13 “(E) GRANTS.—

14 “(i) TERM.—The term of a grant
15 awarded under the pilot program shall be
16 1 year.

17 “(ii) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—The
18 amount of a grant awarded under the pilot
19 program shall not exceed \$100,000.

20 “(iii) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—
21 An eligible entity awarded a grant under
22 the pilot program shall use not more than
23 10 percent of grant funds for administra-
24 tive expenses.

1 “(iv) REPORT REQUIREMENT.—An el-
2 igible entity awarded a grant under the
3 pilot program shall periodically submit to
4 the Secretary, at such intervals as deter-
5 mined by the Secretary, a report describing
6 the use and impact of the grant funds, in-
7 cluding—

8 “(I) the number of sites, and
9 type of sites, that benefitted from the
10 grant funds;

11 “(II) the number of children
12 served as a result of the grant funds;
13 and

14 “(F) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE; BEST PRAC-
15 TICES.—The Secretary shall provide technical
16 assistance to, and share best practices with, eli-
17 gible entities that receive grants under the pilot
18 program.

19 “(G) REPORT.—Not later than 4 years
20 after the date of establishment of the pilot pro-
21 gram, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a
22 report on the administration of the pilot pro-
23 gram, including a summary of the reports re-
24 ceived by the Secretary under subparagraph
25 (E)(iv).

1 “(H) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIA-
2 TIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated
3 to the Secretary to carry out the pilot program
4 \$1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027
5 through 2029.”.