

By: González of Dallas

H.B. No. 2886

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to establishing the food systems office to promote food security.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Title 2, Agriculture Code, is amended by adding Chapter 22 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 22. FOOD SECURITY

Sec. 22.001. DEFINITION. In this chapter, "office" means the food systems office within the department.

Sec. 22.002. FOOD SYSTEMS OFFICE. (a) The food systems office is established within the department.

(b) The office shall develop programs that support food access and food security for Texas residents. The office shall encourage and coordinate food security planning in this state for:

(1) establishing more localized food markets through measures such as connecting local schools, retailers, and distributors to local producers and collaborating with local stakeholders to expand food delivery areas and providing buying support to small retailers;

(2) creating streamlined and consolidated application processes for multiple programs through a clearinghouse for public assistance programs, farmer and distribution support programs, opportunities for retail development, and food access business development information and resources;

1           (3) establishing a communication network of local,  
2 state, federal non-governmental, and for-profit entities and  
3 programs operating in and relating to the food system in this state;

4           (4) assisting farmers in contributing to food security  
5 such as by developing and providing information and resources  
6 regarding local food production and food markets;

7           (5) collecting and monitoring information, such as  
8 local poverty rates and measures of food access, to identify food  
9 deserts and other communities or populations experiencing food  
10 insecurity and to assist and coordinate applications for relevant  
11 federal and state benefits; and

12           (6) focusing on community empowerment and resiliency  
13 to ensure the office is providing individuals with food access  
14 support.

15           SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.