

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 3562
By: Thompson, Senfronia
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties note that some public school students in Texas are required to pay a portion of lunch costs if their parent's or guardian's income exceeds the income eligibility guidelines for a student's participation in a free or reduced price lunch program. In some districts, students who are required to pay for lunch have a lunch card or lunch account with funds provided by their parents to pay for their lunch. When the funds on the account are depleted, the students are no longer able to receive a hot lunch until the lunch card is reloaded with funds. H.B. 3562 seeks to address this issue by ensuring that all students can receive a hot lunch.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 3562 amends the Education Code to require a school district that allows students to use a prepaid meal card or account to purchase meals served at the school to adopt a grace period policy regarding the use of the cards or accounts. The bill requires the policy to allow a student whose meal card or account balance is exhausted or insufficient to continue, for a period determined by the district, to purchase meals by accumulating a negative balance on the student's card or account or otherwise receiving an extension of credit from the district. The bill requires the policy to require the district to notify the parent of or person standing in parental relation to the student that the student's meal card or account balance is exhausted and prohibits the policy from permitting the district to charge a fee or interest in connection with meals purchased after a meal card or account balance is exhausted or insufficient. The bill applies beginning with the 2015–2016 school year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.