

By: Rodriguez of Travis

H.B. No. 3290

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to creating a farm to school community connections pilot program.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 12, Agriculture Code, is amended by adding Section 12.0415 to read as follows:

Sec. 12.0415. FARM TO SCHOOL COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS PILOT PROGRAM. (a) Subject to available funding, the department shall develop and implement a pilot program through which the department will award \$5 million in grant funding to school districts to promote awareness of and increase access to fresh produce by students in those school districts. The department may award a school district \$0.15 per school lunch served by the school district that uses fresh, unprocessed, or minimally processed ingredients purchased directly from the local farms that produce the ingredients. The department may grant an additional allowance to a school district to offset the costs of delivery support for these ingredients. The total amount awarded to a school district under this section may not exceed \$500,000 each school year.

(b) A grant recipient may use grant money awarded under the pilot program only to cover costs that are approved by the department, which may include costs related to food purchases, educational programs, vegetable samples provided to students, field trips to local farms, and school gardens.

1        (c) Not later than December 1, 2016, the department shall  
2 submit an initial report to the legislature that includes:

3            (1) an evaluation of the performance and the operation  
4 of the program; and

5            (2) recommendations on the continuation, elimination,  
6 or expansion of the program.

7        (d) This section expires September 1, 2017.

8        SECTION 2. If funding is available, not later than January  
9 1, 2016, the Department of Agriculture shall implement the farm to  
10 school community connections pilot program established under  
11 Section 12.0415, Agriculture Code, as added by this Act.

12        SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
13 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
14 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
15 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
16 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.