RECALLED

May 21, 2013

**S. 191**

Introduced by Senators Verdin, Sheheen, Lourie, Cromer, O’Dell, Hutto, Jackson, Alexander and McElveen

S. Printed 5/21/13--H.

Read the first time May 2, 2013.

**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND CHAPTER 3, TITLE 46 OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, BY ADDING SECTION 46‑3‑25 TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN A PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE SCHOOLS TO SERVE LOCALLY GROWN, MINIMALLY PROCESSED FARM FOODS.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. The General Assembly finds:

(A) A voluntary program to link local farms to school districts and other institutions to provide students and adults with fresh and minimally processed farm foods for use in their daily meals and snacks will:

(1) strengthen local economies by keeping money within the area;

(2) create jobs;

(3) open a substantial new market for farmers;

(4) provide beginning farmers with a consistent and secure customer base;

(5) help students develop lifelong healthy eating habits and reduce obesity related diseases in South Carolina;

(6) provide students with hands-on learning opportunities, such as farm visits, cooking demonstrations, and the planting and cultivating of school gardens; and

(7) encourage the integration of nutritional and agricultural education into programs of study.

(B) A successful South Carolina Fresh on the Campus program requires the expertise and collaboration of numerous state agencies, including, but not limited to, the State Department of Education, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Health and Environmental Control, and Clemson University.

SECTION 2. Chapter 3, Title 46 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 46‑3‑25. (A) There is created a program within the South Carolina Department of Agriculture to foster relationships between South Carolina farms, school districts, and other institutions and to provide them with fresh and minimally processed foods for consumption by students.

(B) The program must:

(1) identify and promote local farms to food service programs and offer them information concerning actions and strategies to implement the program;

(2) establish a partnership with public and nonprofit resources to implement a public engagement campaign and establish a structure to facilitate communication between school districts, institutions, farmers, and produce distributors;

(3) encourage food service personnel to develop and implement school nutrition plans which purchase and use locally grown farm fresh products;

(4) offer assistance and outreach to school districts that choose to participate in the voluntary program. Assistance and outreach may include, but is not limited to, conducting workshops and training sessions, providing technical assistance regarding the availability of South Carolina farm products, and promoting the benefits of purchasing and consuming fresh food products from this State. School districts that choose to participate in the voluntary program are not required to participate or otherwise accept assistance or outreach; and

(5) regularly consult with the staff of the Department of Health and Environmental Control, the State Department of Education, Clemson University, and other state agencies concerning implementation of the program.

(C) The Department of Agriculture may seek grants and private funding for the program. This subsection may not be interpreted to explicitly or implicitly require any other state agency or department to participate or join the department in any grant applications or private funding efforts.

(D) The Department of Agriculture must establish a website for the program.”

SECTION 3. Regulations may not be promulgated pursuant to this act.

SECTION 4. The provisions contained in this act are repealed July 1, 2018, unless reauthorized by the General Assembly.

SECTION 5. This act takes effect upon approval of the Governor.

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