



• Commodities • Conservation • Credit • Crop Insurance • Energy •
• Forestry • Nutrition • Research, Extension, & Related Matters •
• Rural Development • Specialty Crops & Horticulture • Trade •

School Milk Nutrition Act of 2017 H.R. 4101

ISSUE

Schools have witnessed a decline in milk consumption.

BACKGROUND

In May 2017, USDA Secretary Perdue made administrative changes in the school lunch program to allow schools to serve 1 percent flavored milk through the school meals program.

This legislation would make that administrative decision permanent. Prior to Secretary Perdue's administrative decision, schools were limited to offering low-fat white milk and fat-free white and flavored choices.

LEGISLATION

Reps. G.T. Thompson (R-Penn.) and Joe Courtney (D-Conn.) introduced H.R. 4101, the School Milk Nutrition Act of 2017. The bill would allow schools to offer low-fat flavored milk, in addition to the current offering of fat-free flavored milk, to participants in the federal school lunch and breakfast programs. The bill allows individual schools and school districts to determine which milkfat varieties to offer their students.

The bill:

- Provides schools the option of offering low-fat (1 percent) flavored milk, rather than only fat-free flavored milk– but only if the milk contains no more than 150 calories per 8-ounce serving;
- Eliminates unnecessary and cumbersome paperwork for schools that wish to offer students more variety;
- Allows milk to be sold in the same age-appropriate container sizes as competing beverages;
- Establishes a pilot program designed to increase milk consumption through expanded breakfast programs, a la carte sales, new outlets, etc., with a focus on improvements to packaging, refrigeration, flavors and merchandising; and
- Allows mothers in the Women, Infant and Children's program to select reduced-fat milk (2 percent) for themselves or their children with a written request.

There are 30 House cosponsors. The bill was referred to the House Education and Workforce Committee rather than the Agriculture Committee.

No similar bill has been introduced in the Senate.

No score has been received from the Congressional Budget Office.

POSITION

Farm Bureau supports the legislation because:

-Milk is the No. 1 source of nine essential nutrients in many young Americans' diets and provides many significant health benefits. The bill will hopefully reverse the decline of milk consumption in schools.

-If children don't drink milk, it is very difficult for them to get sufficient amounts of three of the four major nutrients lacking in most children's diets – calcium, potassium and Vitamin D.

FARM BUREAU POLICY OPPOSES:

Any regulation or legislation that will ban or limit flavored milk in schools.