

STATE OF NEW YORK

6957

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

March 27, 2025

Introduced by Sens. COMRIE, MAY -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Health

AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to creating a food security, empowerment and economic development program

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Legislative intent. The legislature finds there is a need
2 for community economic development to improve the food system in areas
3 where there is an inadequate food supply and many residents who rely on
4 fluctuating government and private food assistance. There is a need to
5 develop food resources and businesses in these communities that provide
6 higher quality, more accessible food. The legislature also finds that
7 local farmers and food producers can and should benefit from these
8 efforts.

9 The legislature further finds that as the federal government and New
10 York state attempt to reduce dependency on government, there is a need
11 to support families leaving public assistance for work. One approach to
12 increasing work opportunities and addressing the food needs in these
13 communities is through the development of "community food security",
14 which is defined as people successfully obtaining an acceptable, nutri-
15 tious diet using local non-emergency sources.

16 Community food security projects are designed to meet the food needs
17 of low income people, increase the self-reliance of communities in
18 providing for their own food needs, and promote comprehensive responses
19 to local food, farm and nutrition issues. For example, these projects
20 provide training in urban gardening and sales, assist entrepreneurs
21 starting micro-enterprises, support farmers' markets in distressed
22 neighborhoods and provide food-based educational opportunities for
23 schools.

24 The legislature supports the goals of self-reliance, community-based
25 economic development, profitable local agriculture, improved nutrition
26 and helping families and individuals help themselves. Therefore, the
27 legislature finds that the creation of a community food security program
28 for New York state will benefit struggling working families and their

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 communities, provide new markets for family farmers, create food-based
2 jobs and small businesses, and ensure healthier citizens and neighbor-
3 hoods.

4 § 2. The public health law is amended by adding a new article 27-FF to
5 read as follows:

6 ARTICLE 27-FF
7 COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY,
8 EMPOWERMENT AND
9 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

10 Section 2790. Community food security, empowerment and economic develop-
11 ment program.

12 2791. Grants to organizations.

13 2792. Advisory council.

14 § 2790. Community food security, empowerment and economic development
15 program. The community food security, empowerment and economic develop-
16 ment program is established within the department. Such program is
17 established to support the development of community food projects
18 designed to meet the food needs of low-income people, increase the self-
19 reliance of communities in providing for their own food needs and
20 promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm and nutrition
21 issues. These projects will attempt to: increase the availability, in
22 the targeted communities, of culturally acceptable, affordable, nutri-
23 tionally adequate food, from local sources whenever possible; develop
24 linkages between local farmers and communities served by the project;
25 support job development and job training, including work experience
26 required by welfare reform; support the development of entrepreneurial
27 enterprises; promote good nutrition; encourage long-term planning and
28 multi-agency involvement in the project; and, include community resi-
29 dents in decision-making.

30 § 2791. Grants to organizations. The commissioner shall make grants
31 for program projects, subject to the availability of funding, to commu-
32 nity-based nonprofit organizations and local governments. In order to
33 meet the goals of the program, applicants may create partnerships with
34 other entities, including limited participation by for-profit enter-
35 prises.

36 Preference for these grants shall be given to projects located in
37 communities with a significant percentage of the population participat-
38 ing in government and private food assistance programs.

39 Projects funded by these grants shall be designed to become self-sus-
40 taining, not dependent on continual grants from this program.

41 § 2792. Advisory council. An advisory council shall be established to
42 assist the commissioner in the development of the grant program and in
43 reviewing applications for such grants. The council shall be composed of
44 twelve members with expertise in community food security. Six members
45 shall be appointed by the governor, two members shall be appointed by
46 the temporary president of the senate, two members shall be appointed by
47 the speaker of the assembly, one member shall be appointed by the minor-
48 ity leader of the senate and one member shall be appointed by the minor-
49 ity leader of the assembly. These members shall serve at the will of the
50 appointing authority. The commissioners of the office of temporary and
51 disability assistance, agriculture and markets and economic development
52 or their designees shall also participate in the advisory council.

53 § 3. This act shall take effect on the first of January next succeed-
54 ing the date on which it shall have become a law.