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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SCHOOL MEALS.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1        SECTION 1. Chapter 302D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2        amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
3        and to read as follows:

4        "S302D-        School meals. (a) Beginning with the 2026-  
5        2027 school year, free school meals shall be provided to every  
6        student enrolled in a public charter school that is  
7        participating in the National School Lunch Program whose family  
8        income is no more than three hundred per cent of the federal  
9        poverty level, regardless of a student's eligibility for  
10        participation in the federal school meals program.

11        (b) No student shall be denied a meal solely for failure  
12        to pay for the meal.

13        (c) The commission may adopt rules or policies governing  
14        the collection of funds for student meal accounts with a  
15        negative fund balance; provided that no rule or policy shall  
16        prohibit feeding a student or otherwise conflict with subsection  
17        (b).



1                   (d) It is the intent of this section not to jeopardize the  
2                   receipt of any federal aid and to the extent, and only to the  
3                   extent necessary to effectuate this intent, the governor may  
4                   modify the strict provisions of this section, but shall promptly  
5                   report any such modification with the governor's reasons  
6                   therefore to the next succeeding session of the legislature for  
7                   review.

8                   (e) As used in this section, "school meals" means  
9                   breakfast and lunch prepared and served by a school cafeteria or  
10                   a food vendor that is located outside of school grounds, as  
11                   designated by a public charter school."

12                   SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
13                   revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$                   or so  
14                   much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for  
15                   meal subsidies for students at public charter schools whose  
16                   family income is no more than three hundred per cent of the  
17                   federal poverty level.

18                   The sum appropriated shall be expended by the state public  
19                   charter school commission for the purposes of this Act.

20                   SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

21                   SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.



H.B. NO. 1561

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INTRODUCED BY:

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JAN 15 2026



# H.B. NO. 1561

**Report Title:**

Keiki Caucus; State Public Charter School Commission; Public Charter Schools; Meal Subsidies; Appropriation

**Description:**

Beginning with the 2026-2027 school year, requires public charter schools participating in the National School Lunch Program to provide free meals to students whose family income is no more than three hundred per cent of the federal poverty level. Appropriates funds.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

