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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 267

Offered March 6, 2026

Commending Community Eligibility Provision schools in Virginia.

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WHEREAS, schools across the Commonwealth have adopted the Community Eligibility Provision to ensure that all school children have access to nutritious meals that support their health, well-being, and ability to achieve academic success; and

WHEREAS, the Community Eligibility Provision, a non-pricing meal service option funded by the United States Department of Agriculture, allows eligible schools to serve breakfast and lunch to all enrolled students at no cost, increasing food security and improving academic outcomes; and

WHEREAS, the Community Eligibility Provision supports schools by eliminating the need to collect paper meal applications, reducing administrative costs, and streamlining meal service operations; and

WHEREAS, Virginia enacted legislation to promote participation in the Community Eligibility Provision in 2020 and expanded access to no-cost school meals by fully covering the reduced price copay for eligible students in 2022; and

WHEREAS, participation in the Community Eligibility Provision has expanded substantially in the Commonwealth's public schools over the past five years, with twice as many individual schools (1,238) and 60 percent more school divisions (117) participating, resulting in a tripling of the number of students (more than 700,000) attending a participating school; and

WHEREAS, between the 2022–2023 and 2024–2025 school years, 32,000 more students accessed school breakfast and 43,000 more students accessed school lunch in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, one in seven children in the Commonwealth faces hunger, and two in three families with children say they have to choose between buying enough nutritious food and affording other essentials due to rising food costs; the Community Eligibility Provision plays a critical role in providing support for these families; and

WHEREAS, student and family enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Medicaid helps determine school's eligibility and reimbursement under the Community Eligibility Provision and plays a key role in supporting the long-term financial sustainability of school nutrition programs; and

WHEREAS, continued collaboration among school divisions, state leaders, child nutrition directors, and community partners has been essential to expanding participation in the Community Eligibility Provision across the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Community Eligibility Provision schools in Virginia for their achievements in expanding access to no-cost school meals and supporting the academic success and overall wellness of their students; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Virginia Department of Education's Office of School and Community Nutrition Programs and representatives of Community Eligibility Provision schools in Virginia as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration and appreciation for their commitment to student nutrition and access to school meals.