

House Bill 642

By: Representatives Lim of the 98th, Carpenter of the 4th, and Au of the 50th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 3 of Article 16 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia
2 Annotated, relating to student health, so as to prohibit public primary and secondary schools
3 from serving or selling, or allowing a third party to serve or sell, food or beverages that
4 contain synthetic dye; to provide for a definition; to provide for certification of compliance;
5 to provide legislative findings; to provide a short title; to provide for related matters; to
6 repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 **SECTION 1.**

9 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Georgia Dye Free School Meals Act."

10 **SECTION 2.**

11 The General Assembly finds that:

12 (1) Scientific research has demonstrated that synthetic food dyes can contribute to
13 hyperactivity, inattention, restlessness, sleeplessness, irritability, aggression, and other
14 behavioral challenges in some children. These effects can impact a child's ability to
15 learn, focus, and participate in educational activities; and

H. B. 642

- 1 -

16 (2) Taxpayer funded meal and snack programs provided to children in public schools
17 should support, not hinder, a child's cognitive and behavioral development. School meals
18 and snacks should prioritize nourishment to promote the health and well-being of children
19 and their abilities to meet educational expectations.

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SECTION 3.

21 Part 3 of Article 16 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
22 relating to student health, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

23 "20-2-779.5.

24 (a) As used in this Code section, the term 'synthetic dye' means:

25 (1) Blue 1;

26 (2) Blue 2;

27 (3) Green 3;

28 (4) Red 3;

29 (5) Red 40;

30 (6) Yellow 5; or

31 (7) Yellow 6.

32 (b) Beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, no public primary or secondary school shall
33 serve or sell, or allow a third party to serve or sell, any food or beverage that contains
34 synthetic dye on school grounds during the regular school day or as part of a school
35 breakfast program.

36 (c) This Code section shall not be construed so as to prohibit the parent or guardian of a
37 student at a public primary or secondary school from providing food or beverages that
38 contain synthetic dye to such parent's or guardian's child or for a school or classroom event.

39 (d) The Department of Education shall develop a standardized form that public primary
40 and secondary schools may use to certify that such schools are in compliance with the
41 provisions of this Code section. The Department of Education shall maintain a list of

42 schools that have certified compliance with the provisions of this Code section and shall
43 make such list available on its public website."

44 **SECTION 4.**

45 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.