

HR 8531

Food Deserts Act of 2020

Congress: 116 (2019–2021, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Agriculture and Food

Introduced: Oct 6, 2020

Current Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight, and Department Operations.

Latest Action: Referred to the Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight, and Department Operations. (Dec 3, 2020)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/8531>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Carson, Andre [D-IN-7]

Party: Democratic • **State:** IN • **Chamber:** House

Cosponsors (1 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Del. Norton, Eleanor Holmes [D-DC-At Large]	D · DC		Nov 16, 2020

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Agriculture Committee	House	Referred to	Dec 3, 2020

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Agriculture and Food

Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

Food Deserts Act of 2020

This bill establishes a Department of Agriculture program to provide grants to states for revolving funds to support the establishment and operation of grocery stores in underserved communities.

An *underserved community* is a community that has (1) limited access to affordable, healthy foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables, in grocery retail stores or farmer-to-consumer direct markets; and (2) a high rate of hunger, a high rate of food insecurity, or a high poverty rate.

States must use the funds to make loans to support grocery stores in underserved communities, including for opening a store (excluding new construction), or supporting or purchasing an existing store.

States may only make loans for grocery stores that meet requirements related to

- emphasizing unprocessed, healthful foods;
- providing staple foods and a variety of raw fruits and vegetables;
- having a plan to keep the foods in stock;
- charging prices at or below market averages;
- meeting specified matching requirements using nonfederal funds; and
- being qualified to operate a store or having partnerships with organizations that provide technical assistance.

States must prioritize loan applications from entities that meet criteria related to

- hiring workers from the underserved community,
- providing classes or educational information about a healthful diet,
- sourcing food from local urban farms and gardens,
- not selling alcohol or tobacco products, or
- demonstrating existing supply chain relationships in the grocery industry.

Actions Timeline

- **Dec 3, 2020:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight, and Department Operations.
- **Oct 6, 2020:** Introduced in House
- **Oct 6, 2020:** Sponsor introductory remarks on measure. (CR E934)
- **Oct 6, 2020:** Referred to the House Committee on Agriculture.