

HB 2331 -- FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

SPONSOR: Morris

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Agriculture Policy by a vote of 13 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Select Committee on Agriculture by a vote of 8 to 0.

The bill establishes the Missouri Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. The Department of Health and Senior Services, through a federal grant program with the USDA Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, will provide low-income seniors at least 60 years of age or older with vouchers from county designated distribution sites that may be exchanged for eligible foods at farmers' markets, roadside stands, and community supported agricultural programs.

This bill is similar to HB 1841 (2016).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that many seniors live on a fixed income and cannot afford fresh fruits and vegetables. This bill would help seniors afford fresh produce from farmers' markets across the state. The federal government disbursed over \$20 million for the program last year across 43 states.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Morris; Mary Chronister, Silver Haired Legislature; Rachel Greathouse, Empower Missouri; and Missouri Association Of Agencies For The Aging.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.