



NEW JERSEY

# Association of State Colleges and Universities

150 West State Street, Trenton NJ 08608 Phone (609) 989-1100 Fax: (609) 989-7017

**Assembly Higher Education Committee  
October 23, 2014  
Assembly Bill No. 2811**

Prohibits Four-Year Public and Independent Institutions of Higher Education from Requiring Students to Purchase Meal Plans and Permits the Institutions to Only Offer Meal Plans in the Form of a Spending Allowance

The state colleges and universities oppose this legislation. Colleges and universities mandate meal plans to ensure that students get the nutrition they need. Meal plans ensure that student will have access to healthy food choices.

There is a growing concern over college students and nutrition. The *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* recently published an article indicating that 59% of students at Western Oregon University were "food insecure" at some point during the previous year, with possible implications for academic success, physical and emotional health and other issues.

- Food insecurity during college years could affect cognitive, academic and psychosocial development.
- Factors correlated with reports of food insecurity include fair to poor health, a lower grade point average, low income and employment.
- Reference: Patton-Lopez, Megan M.; Lopez-Cevallos, Daniel F.; Cancel-Tirado, Doris I.; Vazquez, Leticia. (January 2014). Prevalence and correlates of food insecurity among students attending a midsize rural university in Oregon. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*.

Many dormitories do not have community kitchens, and not all college apartments have full kitchens. This will further limit the ability of students to have consistent access to quality food.

Finally, the state colleges and universities also have concerns that the bill would affect the outsourcing of food services and have an adverse effect on current and future contracts with these vendors.

NJASCU  
10-21-14

---

[www.njascu.org](http://www.njascu.org)

*The College of New Jersey  
Kean University  
Montclair State University*

*New Jersey City University  
Ramapo College of New Jersey  
Richard Stockton College of New Jersey*

*Rowan University  
Thomas Edison State College  
William Paterson University*