## Local Government Mandate Statement Kentucky Legislative Research Commission 2020 Regular Session

## **Part I: Measure Information**

<b>Bill Request #:</b> 1103		
Bill #: HB 234		
<b>Document ID #:</b> 2305		
Bill Subject/Title: AN ACT relating to plant-based food options in hospitals.		
Sponsor: Rep. George A. Brown, Jr.		
Unit of Government:       X       City       X       County         Multiple Algorithm       Multiple Algorithm       Multiple Algorithm       Multiple Algorithm		
X Charter County X Consolidated Local X Government		
Office(s) Impacted: Local-government owned hospitals		
Requirement: X Mandatory Optional		
Effect on Powers & Duties: Modifies Existing _X Adds New Eliminates Existing		

## Part II: Bill Provisions and the Estimated Fiscal Impact Relating to Local Government

HB 234 would require hospitals to offer plant-based food as an alternative option for meals and snacks upon request of a patient or the patient's representative, and at no additional cost to the patient beyond the cost of a comparable non-plant-based food option.

Several county governments own hospitals, including Casey County Hospital, Crittenden County Hospital, Hardin Memorial Hospital, Jane Todd Crawford Memorial Hospital, Marshall County Hospital, Murray-Calloway County Hospital, Russell County Hospital, and Taylor Regional Hospital.

The fiscal impact of HB 234 is indeterminable to (negative) minimal initially, and potentially indeterminable to (positive) minimal. Current prices in restaurants and groceries for plant-based foods intended as an alternative to a specific meat type (beef, chicken, pork) tend to be more costly than the meat types they are replacing. Also, there may be up-front and ongoing costs associated with plant-based meal and snack planning that would be necessary to conform to the physician-recommended dietary needs for patients. Food costs may vary significantly among hospitals due to existing supplier purchasing agreements. Plant-based

foods that do not attempt to replicate "meat" may cost less because of less production and fewer processing costs.

Currently, plant-based companies are able to charge as much as they wish because there are fewer alternatives and consumers are willing to pay that amount. According to The Good Food Institute, as the scale grows, so will the required infrastructure, and production methods will become more efficient. As market position is secured, companies will spread research and development costs over a broader market. The presence of larger companies such as JBS, Nestle, and Tyson will allow a greater focus on large-scale production.

According to a 2015 article published in the Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition, a meat-based meal plan that met the weekly nutrition guidelines recommended by the USDA cost \$14.56 more than a plant-based meal plan that met the same guidelines. (However, these guidelines would be for the general public and would not be designed to fit specific dietary needs of some hospital patients who may require more or less fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy, or specific nutrients.)

According to St. Joseph Health System in Sonoma County, California, vegetarian entrees cost less than meat entrees, and the hospital reported savings of \$5,000 per year with meat-free entrees. There may be savings through less food spoilage encountered with animal-based foods.

According to *The Atlantic*, plant-based diets will result in long-term direct health care and environmental savings. These savings would not be easily quantifiable for local governments.

## Part III: Differences to Local Government Mandate Statement from Prior Versions

Part II, above, pertains to the bill as introduced.

Data	St. Joseph Health System (California); Associated Press,
Source(s):	apnews.com/business%20wire/d26faed82ff8460ca5e7 aeb0eea04530; National Kidney
	Foundation; Shepon, A., Eshel, G., Noor, E., & Milo, R. (2018). The opportunity cost of
	animal based diets exceeds all food losses. Proceedings of the National Academy of
	Sciences of the United States of America, 115(15), 3804–3809.
	doi:10.1073/pnas.1713820115;https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/03/the-
	economic-case-for-worldwide-vegetarianism/475524/; Mary M. Flynn & Andrew R.
	Schiff (2015) Economical Healthy Diets (2012): Including Lean Animal Protein Costs
	More Than Using Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition,
	10:4, 467-482, DOI: 10.1080/19320248.2015.1045675;
	https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/03/the-economic-case-for-worldwide-
	vegetarianism/475524/; Specht, PhD, Liz 2019, Why Plant-Based Meat Will Ultimately
	Be Less Expensive Than Conventional Meat, Good Food Institute, accessed January 30,
	2019, https://www.gfi.org/plant-based-meat-will-be-less-expensive

Preparer:Robert JenkinsReviewer:KHCDate:2/17/20