

March 15, 2021

Chair Williams, Vice-Chair Leif, Vice-Chair Ruiz, and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support HB 2348 for many reasons, but let me tell you about my experience visiting my now 101-year-old mother in a long term care facility before Covid. I would stay as a guest at her facility for a few days at a time, but it was always a struggle for me to find enough to eat. Only rarely did their cafeteria have vegan options at dinner, and even the sides often had butter or dairy. I would be forced to hunt for calories in the salad bar. Breakfast was even worse - loads of fatty eggs and sausages, but nothing vegan at the main breakfast bar. Many days fruit and toast was about all I could find. I would have to go out to a grocery store to get enough good food to eat - an option my mother did not have.

I am the planning committee coordinator for the Northwest Health and Nutrition Conference - an annual conference for the past 11 years offering continuing education credits for doctors, dietitians, naturopaths, and other health care professionals. Our speakers regularly present data on the impacts of diet on health, and it is clear that whole food plant-based diets reduce the chances of developing coronary artery disease, diabetes, strokes, certain cancers, and many other chronic diseases. HB 2348 does not tell anybody what to eat, but it at least offers patients and long-term care residents the options of eating a healthy plant-based diet.

So please move HB 2348 out of committee to the House floor with a do-pass recommendation. It is good for health, and good for the planet.

Peter Spendelow, PhD
Planning Committee Coordinator
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