

February 19, 2025

TO: House Committee on Education
FROM: Kaia King
SUBJECT: Support for HB 3435

Chair Neron, Vice-Chair McIntire, Vice-Chair Dobson, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kaia King and I am a third grade teacher. I heard about this legislation from my mother who is the Policy and Advocacy Director for Our Children Oregon (OCO), a statewide organization that advances equitable policies, data and research, and whole-child advocacy. When she told me about HB 3435, School Meals for All, I asked if I could submit testimony based on my experience as a teacher in Colorado, a state that has implemented School Meals for All statewide.

I can personally attest to the benefits this type of legislation has on school children. I teach at a Title I school and many of the kids in my class are food insecure. If they didn't get breakfast and lunch at school, they would come to school hungry everyday and try to focus on learning on an empty stomach. As a school teacher, I can tell you that is next to impossible and causes disruptions to their learning and also impacts the entire class. Food is essential to academic success.

Students simply cannot learn when they are hungry or when they are worried about where their next meal might come from.

I have had a very positive experience teaching in Colorado, a state that recognizes the importance of providing school meals for ALL students, and I hope my home state of Oregon will follow their lead.

I thank you for all of the work you do to support Oregonians and I strongly urge you to **vote YES on HB 3435, School Meals for All.**

Best,
Kaia King