

Support for HB 3435

School Meals for All



February 21, 2025

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

On behalf of Oregon PTA and the thousands of parents, educators, and community members we represent, we urge your support for HB 3435 to establish School Meals for All in Oregon.

For over 100 years, Oregon PTA has advocated for the well-being and success of Oregon's children and youth. We firmly believe that access to nutritious meals is a cornerstone of student success. Research consistently demonstrates that when students have access to healthy meals at school, they are better prepared to learn, grow, and reach their full potential. School meals not only fuel academic achievement but also help students stay focused in the classroom, free from the distraction of hunger.¹

The benefits of universal school meals extend beyond academics. Studies show that providing meals at no cost significantly reduces absenteeism, ensuring more students can attend school consistently and engage in their education². By removing the stigma and financial barriers often associated with school meals, HB 3435 will foster a more inclusive and supportive environment where every student feels valued and cared for.

Oregon has long been a leader in championing policies that support children and families. By passing HB 3435, we have the opportunity to set a national example once again by making School Meals for All a permanent reality. This legislation is a critical investment in the health, equity, and future of Oregon's children.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration. I urge you to support HB 3435 and ensure that every child in Oregon has access to the nutrition they need to thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Robin Roemer

Vice President for Legislation, Oregon PTA

¹ <https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/School-Meals-are-Essential-Health-and-Learning.pdf>

²

<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/the-surprising-connection-between-universal-school-meals-and-student-discipline/2024/04>