

Submitter: Rebekah Sabzalian  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3435

Hello Chair Neron and honorable members of the House Committee on Education,

I am writing to urge your support of HB3435. I support this effort to nourish and feed Oregon's children. I am a parent, licensed Oregon educator, and children's advocate. In this era of destroying public services and tearing down the infrastructure that creates a strong civil society, please choose a more just and people-centered direction. Oregon is a beacon for maintaining strong public and human-wellness centered policies. It is precisely why we find ourselves mentioned over and over again by the current presidential administration. Let's keep being in opposition to policies and budget allocations that don't serve our children and families. Feeding our youngest learners as an essential community service helps ensure their brains are nourished and that working families are able to afford the many financial demands of childcare, child health care, daily household expenses, and enrichment opportunities. Studies prove that children need full bellies to attain skills and retain knowledge. Feeding children and academic achievement go hand in glove.

Although through education, hard work, dedication, and community support, I've been able to earn myself a place in the middle class, I didn't come from a financially stable family. As a child I suffered with poverty and homelessness. I was grateful for free and reduced lunch options but often felt ashamed and alone when this was brought up or when I held a different color lunch card. My family needed help with the cost of daily life. Right now, most families are in some level of financial burden. Please use our tax dollars to ensure kids are taken care of without question. Having children is prohibitively expensive, but we need a multi-generational society for all Oregonians to thrive. Please help younger generations know their government works for them and that starting a family isn't overwhelmingly burdensome. I urge you to support Oregon families by supporting HB 3435.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service.

Sincerely,  
Bekah Sabzalian