

Submitter: Ashleigh Jimenez-Hatchel

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3435

I am writing to express my strong support for the initiative to provide school meals for all students in Oregon. As a frequent user of the school breakfast and lunch programs, I have witnessed firsthand the significant impact that access to nutritious meals has on our children's well-being and educational performance.

Currently, 1 in 6 children in Oregon face food insecurity, and many families struggle to provide consistent meals for their children. By making school meals accessible to all students, we can directly address these pressing issues. Providing meals for everyone not only ensures that no child goes hungry during the school day, but it also helps eliminate the stigma associated with free school lunch programs. When all children receive meals, it fosters a sense of equality and belonging among students, allowing them to focus on their learning rather than their circumstances at home.

Additionally, school meals play a vital role in supporting children's health and development. Proper nutrition is essential for cognitive function and academic success. By investing in universal school meals, we are investing in the future of our children and our community.

I urge the committee to prioritize this initiative and ensure that every child in Oregon has access to healthy, nutritious meals at school. Let us work together to create an environment where all children can thrive without the burden of hunger.

Thank you for considering my testimony. I look forward to your support in making school meals available to all children in our state.

Sincerely,  
Ashleigh Jimenez-Hatchel