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STATE SENATOR
District 17



OREGON STATE SENATE

Testimony in Support of HB 3435: School Meals for All

February 24th, 2025
House Committee on Education
3:00 p.m., Hearing Room B

Chair Neron, Vice Chairs Dobson & McIntire, and Members of the House Committee on Education:

For the record, my name is Lisa Reynolds, and I represent West Portland and communities in Northeastern Washington County across the way in the State Senate.

I have been a pediatrician for 20-plus years, and I continue to practice when the legislature is not in session. As both a legislator and a pediatrician, I am in strong support of HB 3435 – not to mention as a mom!

At a public hearing last month, Rick Guapo, the director of the Marion Polk Food Share, said something simple and profound: “Nothing good happens when you're hungry.”

Now, let’s imagine kids in their formative years. Kids go hungry; they cannot participate in classes because they are distracted by their hunger or they are “hangry”. Some leave class to get a snack from a teacher or staff member or attend another lunch period. At times, teachers even leave their classrooms to grab a snack for their students. These are avoidable situations that can be solved by HB 3435. Without this, students will miss their crucial milestones and lack the critical foundation they need to succeed in years to come.

As we look toward record investments in our K-12 system, it is essential to recognize that these investments in things like curriculum, staffing, and overall educational experiences will only pay off if our students have the brain function they need to learn. That begins with access to healthy meals. We need to be fueling the future, one full belly at a time. As a former recipient of free lunches as a high school student in Illinois, I urge this committee and Oregon to provide universal free lunches.

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