

Submitter: Rosario Medina

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3201

Chair Hartman, Vice-Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Rosario Medina. I am a parent of three children, a preschool teacher, and a community activist in Southern Oregon.

Research has consistently shown that children experiencing food insecurity struggle to achieve academic success. These children often grow into adults facing long-term health challenges due to a lack of proper nutrition during crucial developmental years. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) has proven to not only promote healthy nutrition but also enhance the overall quality of childcare.

I support HB 3201 for several reasons:

As a community activist, I have worked with families who want nothing more than to be independent, yet struggle due to a lack of accessible childcare. In my role as a community care coordinator, I have helped individuals launch careers in childcare—opportunities that would not have been possible without support from programs like CACFP. By expanding access to CACFP, we are not only feeding children but also helping to create more childcare spaces, allowing parents to work and support their families.

As a preschool teacher, I see firsthand how nutrition impacts a child's ability to learn. I have worked with students who, without proper meals, might be labeled as "behavior problems." Yet, after receiving nutritious food, they are able to regulate themselves and engage in learning. CACFP ensures that my students have access to the food they need to develop, learn essential skills, and be ready for kindergarten and beyond. Investing in their nutrition now helps build the foundation for a lifetime of success.

As a mother, I have personally experienced the life-changing impact of this program. There was a time when I regularly relied on food banks to feed my family. Knowing that my children received a nutritious breakfast and lunch at childcare gave me the stability I needed to focus on moving forward. That support helped me get to where I am today—giving back to my community and helping others do the same.

Regardless of political affiliation, one thing we can all agree on is that children deserve to be well cared for. Let's put kids first. Choose children. Change the world.

Let's start with Oregon. Let's start with this bill.

I urge you to vote yes on HB 3201.

Thank you.

Rosario Medina