

Submitter: Isabela Villarreal
On Behalf Of: Next Up Action Fund
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

My name is Isabela Villarreal and I'm the Policy and Communications Director at Next Up Action Fund. Our organization has been around since 2002, and our mission is to build political power with diverse young people to achieve a more just and equitable Oregon. We're an organization led by and working with predominantly Black, Indigenous, and youth of color. What we want most is a world that values and invests in them, and to do so we need to make sure that children flourish and have access to food. Thus, we are testifying in strong support of the School Meals For All, HB 3435, which will ensure that free breakfast and lunches are offered to any student, regardless of their ability to pay.

We want an Oregon where youth can thrive and be successful students and human beings. 1 in 6 children in Oregon don't have enough food to eat. The rate is 2-3x higher for Black, Latinx, and Indigenous children. Students can't learn when they're hungry, or when they're worried about where their next meal might come from. School meals enable students to grow and learn, and provide far-reaching benefits beyond the school day.

No student in Oregon should go hungry at school, no matter where they live, or how much money their family makes. We urge you all to vote YES on HB 3435, School Meals for All, this legislative session so that all of our kids have the food they need to learn and grow.