

Submitter: Alejandra Gurrola

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

I am writing to express my strong support of SMFA. Ensuring that every child has access to nutritious meals during the school day is not only a matter of equity—it is an essential investment in our students' academic success, health, and overall well-being.

Every child deserves to start their day ready to learn, and no student should have to struggle with hunger while trying to focus in the classroom. Studies consistently show that access to school meals improves student concentration, behavior, attendance, and achievement. Yet for too many families, the cost of school meals remains a barrier, even when they don't qualify for existing assistance.

By providing free meals to all students, we remove the stigma that often surrounds free or reduced-price lunch programs, reduce administrative burdens on schools and families, and create a more inclusive, supportive learning environment for everyone.

This initiative is especially vital now as many families continue to face financial uncertainty. Universal free meals are a practical and compassionate solution that can help close opportunity gaps and promote health and educational equity across our communities.

I urge policymakers to fully support SMFA. Our children's future—depends on the choices we make today.

Thank you.