



May 4, 2020

Dear Members of the House Education Policy Committee:

Legal Services Advocacy Project is writing in support of the DE3 to HF163 – specifically the provisions that protect students from lunch shaming practices.

As we enter a period of extraordinary economic uncertainty, the possibility of rising school meal debt will create new pressures for Minnesota school districts and lunch rooms. The Minnesota Legislature and Minnesota Department of Education must provide guardrails against any practices that harm the health and well-being of students experiencing financial hardship. The State should also create guidance around best practices and policies in lunch rooms where debt is a reality.

School meals are a lifeline for thousands of children statewide. Minnesota school staff have stepped up for children this spring in remarkable ways to ensure no child experiences increased hunger due to the loss of daytime meals. We applaud those efforts and appreciate consideration of legislation that further protects the health and well-being of children.

We appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Webster", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jessica Webster  
Staff Attorney