



Minnesota House of Representatives Education Policy Committee
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: HF18 and HF36

June 16, 2020

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Leah Gardner and I am Policy Director at Hunger Solutions Minnesota. Please accept this as my written testimony in support of the measures included in HF18 and HF36 to end lunch shaming.

In these times of uncertainty and economic hardship, schools remain a critical access point for families in need of food. Unfortunately, we anticipate seeing unprecedented levels of food insecurity continue into the upcoming school year.

When children return to their classrooms, our commitment to their well-being must remain steadfast. This leaves no room for practices that single out or demean a student for having a lunch debt, like dumping their hot meal and replacing it with a cold sandwich. Unfortunately, documented incidences of lunch shaming have occurred as recently as this past November. As a result, it is necessary that we act now to ensure that in the future all communications regarding school meal balances remain strictly between adults and that all children will be served a nutritious meal regardless of their family's ability to pay.

Thank you for taking action to make it clear that lunch shaming will no longer be tolerated in Minnesota.

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