

Opposition to HB 1132

Dear Chairman Luick and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the North Dakota Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (NDAND), we respectfully oppose HB 1132, which proposes offering whole and 2% milk in North Dakota schools. This bill raises concerns for nutrition professionals regarding children's health.

The USDA's National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs are designed to provide balanced, nutritious meals, and current guidelines permit only skim (fat-free) or 1% (low-fat) milk as part of a reimbursable meal. Whole and 2% milk, which contains significantly more calories and fat, is not allowed in these meals. Additionally, whole and 2% milk does not meet USDA Smart Snack Guidelines and cannot be sold during school hours.

Allowing whole and 2% milk would increase students' caloric intake, as the extra calories cannot be offset by adjustments to other meal components. With childhood obesity already being a major concern, the additional calories could exacerbate existing health issues.

Offering whole and 2% milk would also present logistical challenges. Since it cannot be sold during school hours, schools would need to absorb the costs without generating revenue. Furthermore, implementing bulk milk delivery systems would require significant infrastructure changes to track portions accurately and maintain product quality and temperature. The added complexity and cost of such a system may not be sustainable, especially given the limited nutritional benefits of whole and 2% milk.

In conclusion, NDAND is concerned that offering whole and 2% milk would unnecessarily increase calorie consumption and place additional burdens on school nutrition services, without providing a meaningful nutritional advantage. We urge the committee to adhere to current federal standards, which prioritize balanced, health-conscious meals for students.

We thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

The North Dakota Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics