

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony. I am writing in support of providing breakfast and lunch to all students.

I have a kindergartner and first grader in public school in Jamestown, North Dakota. I, like so many other parents, have seen firsthand how hunger affects my children. They go from attentive and respectful to distracted and easily irritable within a short span of time. And that's just two kids—imagine multiplying the challenge of regulating emotions when hungry to a whole classroom of children. It's not possible. And it's not fair to the kids in our school whose families cannot afford snacks and meals.

Because there are no free lunch or snack options at our school, our teachers reach out to parents and ask for food donations to support their classroom. We are a title 1 school. Budgets are already tight for so many families. Imagine the burden that would be relieved for both teachers and parents if they knew their kids were fed. Imagine the capabilities of our children—how much more they could learn, show respect, and engage with their peers—if their hunger was not controlling their emotions and behaviors.

You have the opportunity today to not simply imagine a future where our kids are not hungry. You can actually make it happen. Please support this bill.