

Dear Representatives,

Hello, we are representatives from the Mandan Middle School Student Council testifying on House Bill Number 1475. The Lunch Bill is a huge, constant problem here in our environment. Even we, as students, have had conversations about how, as families with average household income, the lunch account always seems to be empty. Many other students feel this burden constantly weighing them down even stronger and longer than us. This is why the bill should be passed. We believe that every school would benefit.

Many students are in “negatives” or in debt with lunch money. A lot of families struggle to keep up with the never ending lunch fees. We are testifying because we see constant struggle throughout our entire school with meeting their lunch fees. It’s difficult for families to deal with the debt stacking high. Students feel tied down and struggle to focus on schoolwork. Lunch should be a necessity. Kids look forward to it, but due the fact that they have negative account balance, it becomes a hassle. Kids feel burdened as if it is their fault, and this leads to bad eating habits, not being able to academically succeed, and negatively impacting social experiences.

When going through the lunch line it is very obvious that students are embarrassed about not being able to get seconds when they are still hungry, not being able to get a small treat, even once a week, or even just getting through the lunch line without seeing the red and negative lunch account money. This is an issue, because for some students, lunch at school is the only thing that they can eat all day and they might not eat all weekend. It is important that they get enough nutritious food when at school to support smart, healthy minds.

Thank you for hearing our testimony and considering our opinion and point of view.

Mandan Middle School Student Council