

I'm writing to show support for HB 1553. I grew up in a household with very limited income. My mother was a widow with 2 young children and her retail job barely covered our living expenses. We were lucky to occasionally get financial help from others in her family but mostly we were lucky to be able to afford food at home so when we were able to have free lunches in middle and high school, it was a huge help to our family. The only problem with it was that I and my brother had to use small yellow punchcards to "pay" for our lunches and all the other kids saw that. I was only teased by one person but my brother was less lucky and I couldn't help him defend himself since he was in different classes in a different part of the building. It would've been another great grace if we hadn't had to be so "marked" for harassment and abuse by these yellow cards or even standing out because others could see we got our lunches for free when they had to pay. Making this the norm for everyone will save a lot of misery for a lot of kids so I support HB 1553. Thank you.