



1 Testimony in support with needed amendments

2 HB 1394 – School Lunch Meal Policies

3 Chairman Heinert and members of the House Education committee. We come to you
4 with general support with the concept of this bill but are seeking your assistance with
5 amendments to help schools make this workable or to consider a \$84M fiscal note to
6 cover the ramifications. In HB 1491 you just heard, you understand the cost of paying
7 for lunches for all students through the biennium. The reality is there are ramifications
8 to this bill unless we amend or decide to accept 1491 and fund lunches or find a way to
9 do so.

10 Unpaid lunch debt is a very real issue in schools – this is a hard reality as we come out
11 of COVID with families who have become accustomed to or who have never had to
12 before pay for school lunch. With this bill there will be absolutely no reason for any
13 parent to pay for meals moving forward. It is like posting a speed limit sign and there
14 being no ramifications for ignoring it. Do you think everyone will follow the rule? As
15 you could see from the prior fiscal note, this is a very large fiscal issue. We conceptually
16 agree with kids all getting the same meals. But we also must have a means to pay for
17 the service, so we've come up with some potential solutions for you to consider.

18 1) The state funds lunches and we add the \$84M fiscal note and ensure it is attached
19 to the prior bill and this one (Fiscal. Note from 1491).

20 2) The state approves additional mill levy authority in the MISC mills section
21 allowing for an additional 3-5 mills of levying authority to pay for meals.



1 3) Section 6 is stricken from this bill so that there is ability to work with parents to
2 collect. Frankly it is still a struggle to get payment even with collections, but that
3 is our only means to getting to a payment.

4 We know how incredibly important it is for kids to have a nutritious meal to learn well.
5 We want them to have food to do so. We must be able to be fiscally responsible about
6 how we approach this issue. Thank you for the time to testify on this bill,