

February 8, 2025

Chairman Heinert and members of the Education Committee:

I am writing as a North Dakota parent to ask that you consider voting to pass HB 1553.

North Dakota is a very fortunate state to have the ability to afford this through the Legacy Fund and I believe it should be a priority for our state to make sure every child can eat at school without having to apply for free meals.

I understand that we already have a process in place to allow those who need it to receive free or reduced meals. HOWEVER, this requires the parents to actually apply for this and sadly this doesn't always happen. Children shouldn't be punished because their parents aren't able to complete the necessary forms.

My family is very fortunate to be able to afford meals for our children currently, but we have experienced times of great financial stress when we've had to rely on support from others. During this time, including when free school meals were available during COVID, we could not have survived without this financial support.

We all know that inflation has struck us all hard and not having to worry about paying for school meals could be a lifesaver for many families. Additionally, I think there could be an added bonus of approving HB 1475 in that families may use the money saved to put back in our communities by being able to spend more locally.

Please support HB 1553.

Respectfully submitted,  
Janet Anderson  
Burlington, ND