



TO: HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
FROM: KASANDRA GRIFFIN,
POLICY MANAGER FOR FOOD AND SCHOOL HEALTH
UPSTREAM PUBLIC HEALTH
DATE: FEBRUARY 6, 2015
RE: HB 2545
RE. FREE SCHOOL LUNCH FOR INCOME-QUALIFIED KIDS

Upstream Public Health is a statewide public health advocacy organization. We believe that smart policies are the best way to create communities that help people lead healthy, full lives.

I am here today to add our voices to the chorus of people supporting this bill. We agree with everything that has been said and I'm going to be very brief.

I want to add one new element to the information you have already heard, building on Representative Gomberg's comments: Oregon suffers from some of the worst high school graduation rates in the nation. Low-income kids are some of the most likely to fall through the cracks.

Anything we can do to help those kids succeed, will help our collective bottom line, in the form of higher graduation rates, a more educated population, and less of an opportunity gap.

The hungry kids of today can become the innovators, job-creators, and legislators of tomorrow, if they have a chance. That will make Oregon a stronger, healthier, more equitable state, and I urge you to support it.