

To: Senate Committee on Labor and Business
From: Amy Silvia – Portland Public School Employee
Re: Support SB 496
Date: March 15, 2021

Hello. My name is Amy Silvia. I have been a Lead Food Service worker with the Portland Public School District for over 8 years. I would've liked to have been with you to testify virtually on Tuesday morning – but I will be at work.

As part of SEIU 503, Local 140, we have around 500 members; about 300 custodial and about 200 Nutrition Services at PPS. I write in support of OR SB 496.

Since March of 2020 – the closure of schools due to COVID - we have been asked to be out on the front lines feeding kids. We've worked in rain, cold, hazardous air conditions from the wild fires and excessive summer heat. We are the face of PPS. We have been interacting with the public since the beginning of this pandemic. We are mostly women and some of the lowest paid workers at PPS.

We were on workshare for a while, but management has ended it starting last Friday. Many of us have had our hours reduced due to lower participation from students. With hours being cut, our wages are a lot less.

Since September the majority of Nutrition Services workers were down 20-40% on their work hours. If we don't work, we don't get paid. We don't have vacation days. Many of us have second and even third jobs just to get by. Unlike some school districts ours does not allow us to split up our income to cover all 12 months. Summertime is the hardest. If we don't sign up for the limited amount of work available, we have no income for the whole summer.

Having unemployment options throughout the summer would make a huge difference to our lives. It has already been a struggle with reduced hours/income. Please consider taking care of those of us who take care of the kids and families. Please pass OR SB496.