



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 101-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

May 5, 21

To: [Senate Committee on Education](#)
Chair, Senator Michael Dembrow
Vice-Chair, Senator Chuck Thomsen

Re: HB 2536 Requires schools to offer free meals. – **Support**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon has positions that:

- The early years of a child’s life are crucial in building the foundation for educational attainment and greatly impact success or failure in later life.
- The League supports policies, programs, and funding at all levels of the community and government that promote the well-being, encourage the full development, and ensure the safety of all children—this includes: nutrition and food access for vulnerable children and families.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports this measure that clarifies the intent of the Student Success Act and helps to make nutritious food more widely available to Oregon’s children.

Hunger has become an all-too-common problem in Oregon. In a recent 2020 Oregon Food Bank Report, the rate of food insecurity (being without access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food) is currently estimated at 14.6% in Oregon, and of those 194,070 are estimated to be children.

The changes this law makes clarify a necessity to provide 2 meals, breakfast and lunch, during school hours, for all students who qualify, using a more generous equation than in previous law. The schools are not allowed to opt out of this responsibility, thus providing statewide access to more nutritious food.

This measure might also provide a way of studying the problems of food insecurity in our state.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca L. Gladstone".

Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne I. Nesse".

Anne Nesse
LWVOR Legislative Action Education Portfolio