

Chair Neron and members of the committee,

I am testifying in favor of HB 3435. I worked in schools for many years and now run an after school program at Family Promise, a family homeless shelter in Tigard. You will hear many reasons for universal meals, I will share some of my thoughts about why they seem so important based on what I have seen.

- As I work with kids in the after school program, I see what a motivator food is. While we offer many chances to have fun and learn, some of those attending come because we also have snacks. As we look at reasons students come to school, this cannot be discounted. It is important that meals be available, not come with any stigma attached, and reflect the likes and dislikes of the students.
- I have a dream....While we have free meals, schools maintain a fund that families who can afford school lunches can donate to voluntarily. This is then used to increase the variety and quality of food above what is possible with government funding. So many of those working in school lunch programs work hard to create enticing meals with limited resources. This fund could allow such things as adding cooks to do more intense preparation and lunchroom monitors who engage with the kids, letting them help shape future menus.

I am proud to live in a state where this is a priority and hope that we can make it happen.

Thank you for your service,

Carol Greenough, Ph.D.