

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB1581

Access to food and water should not be a privilege. It should not be expected that students should have to pay for these necessities when they are in a learning environment that they legally have to be in, and part of learning involves having the nutrients required to help your brain develop and to give you energy to learn and do other activities. It should be required to provide the materials needed to learn, including food and water.

It can be difficult for parents to take the time to pack lunches or cook breakfast in the morning before their daily duties, whether it's due to a job/school schedule, a non-traditional family structure, or even unusual circumstances. This might not be a problem for middle or high school students, but elementary school ages kids and students in need of higher support might not be able to take on this chore before school. But guaranteeing breakfast and lunch for all students regardless of income makes sure that every kid can be fed no matter the circumstance.

Many families, especially in the Forest Grove/Cornelius district, rely on school meals for income reasons. They have the resources to be able to pack their children food for lunch every day due to lack of income, and especially during this ICE crisis, many families are afraid to even leave their homes to go to their local grocery store in fear of being taken from ICE agents camping out in parking lots. If we cannot help people live during this crisis, we must at least help them survive by giving their children free food at school. Additionally, giving food to everyone regardless of income removes the stigma of needing to ask for government assistance (since everyone is receiving these benefits without having to apply) and any potential bullying.