

Submitter: Elisabeth Genly

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1581

The Steering Committee of Indivisible Forest Grove strongly supports SB 1581.

As a volunteer organization that is struggling every day to help meet the increasing hunger needs of many families in our community, we strongly support this bill. Many children in our community are suffering from food insecurity. Some of those families are too proud to admit that they need help. Some of those families are scared to do so. This is an important reason why the “regardless of income” provision is so important in this bill.

As stated by the Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials, “This bill provides free breakfast and lunch to all students, regardless of income. This means that struggling families will have \$1400 extra dollars per year per child to put toward dinner, rent, and utilities. This is especially critical right now, as costs continue to increase at the grocery store and the federal government restricts funding and eligibility for SNAP and other food programs. Hungry children often experience decreased concentration, increased irritability, and lower academic performance. In other words, it’s difficult to learn if you’re hungry, because your biological instincts focus on finding food rather than higher-level thinking.”

Research also consistently shows that providing meals at no cost significantly reduces absenteeism and chronic absenteeism, ensuring more students are present, regulated, and ready to engage in learning.

Our state's children deserve our full caring. We support SB 1581.

Sincerely,

Elisabeth Genly

Member, Steering Committee, Indivisible Forest Grove
Forest Grove, Oregon