



## Service Employees International Union – Oregon State Council

February 6, 2026

Chair Frederick, Vice-Chair Weber, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 1581: School Meals for All.

My name is Alberto Gallegos, and I am providing testimony on behalf of SEIU Oregon, which is composed of two locals: Local 503 and Local 49. Together, we represent over 85,000 workers in Oregon and SW Washington who serve as janitors, security officers, maintenance and custodial workers, healthcare and homecare workers, and public employees at agencies such as ODOT, DHS, and BOLI. Our members—many who are immigrants or come from mixed-status families—clean, protect, and maintain your buildings; care for seniors and people with disabilities; and provide critical public services that keep Oregon running.

SB 1581 is a direct investment in the well-being of working-class and immigrant families. In the midst of a profound affordability crisis, no parent working multiple jobs should have to fear their child going hungry at school. This bill guarantees every student breakfast and lunch at no cost, removing a massive financial burden and source of daily anxiety for the families we represent.

SB 1581 recognizes the realities of working families' lives. By allowing breakfast to be served after the bell and in the classroom, it respects that parents who work early shifts or navigate complex transportation barriers cannot always get their children to school before the official start time. This provision meets families where they are, ensuring students are nourished and ready to learn without punishing them for circumstances beyond their control.

Furthermore, this bill aligns with our core union values of equity and dignity. Eliminating meal applications, debt collection, and the stigma of “meal shaming”, protects students from humiliation and creates a school environment rooted in inclusion. The data is clear: well-nourished students have better attendance, behavior, and academic outcomes. SB 1581 is not just a meal program; it is a foundational support for the next generation of Oregonians and a tangible step toward economic justice. It allows parents to focus on their work and their families, knowing their children are cared for. We urge this committee to pass SB 1581.

Thank you,

Alberto Gallegos  
Political and Government Relations Organizer  
SEIU Oregon State Council