

January 23, 2023

Minnesota House Education Finance and Policy Committee  
443 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155



Dear Chair Youakim and Members of the House Education Finance and Policy Committee,

As the coalition behind the Hunger-Free Schools campaign, we are writing today to express support of HF5, which would provide no cost breakfast and lunch to all students in Minnesota. By ensuring that all schools in our state are Hunger-Free Schools, we can eliminate hunger in Minnesota's classrooms; eliminate stigma from the lunchroom; and reduce the paperwork strain that burdens Minnesotan families and schools.

In Minnesota, 1 in 4 food-insecure kids comes from a household whose income disqualifies them from accessing free or reduced-cost meals at school. For a state that prides itself in being an exceptional place to raise a family, this is unacceptable.

School breakfast and lunch can account for more than half of a child's daily calories, providing sustenance that they may not have reliable access to at home. School meals also help establish lifelong healthy eating habits, and can reduce the likelihood of chronic conditions like diabetes and heart disease developing later in life. Studies also show that school meal participation lessens the achievement gap and allows students to focus on what really matters when they're at school – learning.

Providing free school meals to all students is an investment in Minnesota's future. It supports student success, working parents, teachers and nutrition staff, and strengthens our state's foundation for a solid and sustainable future. We urge you to support HF5, which would provide today's students the support they need to grow into Minnesota's business leaders, parents, and legislators of tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Advocates for Better Health  
Allina Health  
American Diabetes Association  
Appetite for Change  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota  
Cargill  
Children's Minnesota  
EdAllies  
Education Minnesota  
Every Meal  
Food Research and Action Center  
General Mills  
Hunger Solutions Minnesota  
Land Stewardship Project

Land O'Lakes  
Local Public Health Association  
MAZON  
Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid  
Minnesota Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics  
Minnesota Business Coalition for Racial Equity  
Minnesota Farmers Union  
Minnesota School Social Workers Association  
Multicultural Autism Action Network  
Second Harvest Heartland  
SEIU 284  
Share Our Strength  
The Food Group  
Youthprise

