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The Honorable John Murante

District 49

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Re: Community Eligibility for School Meals

Dear Sen. John Murante:

I am writing as a constituent to encourage you to support the Community Eligibility for School Meals, more formally known as Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), in General Assembly Bill NO. 524LB. This Important appropriation to Nebraska schools and school children is continually working on families no longer having to face language or literacy barriers related to school meal applications and students are no longer going to have to be distracted from their primary job of learning due to hunger. CEP is allowing each school/ district participants to serve their students free and reduced breakfasts and lunches.

I am a concerned citizen and I want to share with you my concerns about the importance of Community Eligibility Provision. For background, I pulled information from the Voices of Children’s Policy Coordinator Aubrey Mancuso. Through research, Aubrey found that in Douglas County almost 1 in 5 children is “food insecure”, thus meaning that they don’t know where there next meal is going to coming from, and 43% of students are eligible for free and reduced price meals. We know that hunger can delay a child’s ability to learn and I believe that we should maximize available resources to ensure that all children in our community have the best possible opportunity to succeed.

I ask you to support this important piece of legislation, which will make such a difference in the lives of constituents you serve. I hope that as schools across the country move to make their schools hunger-free zones, and I hope that we choose to follow through with the same actions. While we wait, almost 1 in 5 students will continue to face challenges related to hunger and stigma for another school year, and we will have missed the opportunity to start making things better for them right now. I would love to see OPS move forward to at least pilot this option for the coming school year.

I also would appreciate it if you would let me know of the action that you take on this matter. Thank you for taking time to read my concerns, and the concerns of parents across the state.

Sincerely,

Kayleen Malizzi