

Hanna Pease
Sidney
LD 577

Testimony of Hanna Pease, Sidney

In Support of LD 577

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Hanna Pease, I am the mother of a child in the RSU 18 school district.

Today, I'm submitting testimony in support of LD 577 "An Act to Maximize Federal Funding and Protect Maine's Universal School Meals Program". I'd like to thank Senator Tipping for his commitment to school meals in Maine.

Although I did not grow up in Maine, I did grow up in rural Vermont, on a small dairy farm. Money was usually tight, and I did qualify for a limited amount of free school lunch and breakfast. I cannot tell you the number of times my "credit" for covered meal ran out at school. I solely relied on being able to have a meal or two, especially in high school, and often that would be all I ate for that entire day.

That's why I believe this amendment is so important, children rely on this kind of funding and programs just to eat, kids will go hungry like I did if we do not protect this.

This amendment makes sense in light of a proposed federal rollback of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) and proposed 100% household income verification requirement for free and reduced price school meal eligibility, along with proposed cuts to SNAP and Medicaid, this amendment is in anticipation of reduced federal funding for school meals and increased administrative burden for schools and families.

Please consider what it would be like to skip eating for a day, or two, or three, and then consider how that would affect a child that you know, that you care about. Please support this LD 577

I want to thank the co-chairs and committee for their time and commitment to Maine's children and let them know that you're happy to answer any questions they have.

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