

TESTIMONY ON HB 696

Primary and Secondary Education - Breakfast and Lunch Programs - Universal Expansion House Ways and Means Committee

February 14, 2024

Submitted by Christopher Cano, Director of Political & Legislative Affairs
On behalf of SEIU Local 500

Dear Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Ways & Means Committee:

SEIU Local 500 supports HB 696, expanding the free breakfast & lunch program for all children, regardless of income, is a great first step in creating equal opportunity. No child should go hungry because their family falls outside the boundaries on a spreadsheet or they have to incur a debt that affects their advancement.

Feeding children in our public schools is a pillar to combatting the challenges of poverty. This should not be a controversial topic or difficult policy to decide.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future endeavors to make Maryland a global powerhouse when it comes to educating a 21st century workforce. This legislation supports that goal by ensuring children need not worry about when and where their next meal is coming from or how they will afford it.

We appreciate your consideration and support for HB 696.