



Testimony to Maryland House Ways and Means Committee
For Our Kids Act - Bill HB 1469

March 6, 2025

Greetings Chairman Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins and Ways and Means Committee Members,
My name is Cherie Cotsonas. I am President Elect of the Maryland School Nutrition Association.

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 1469.

The purpose of this bill is to provide state funding to serve all students a healthy, nutritious breakfast and lunch each day at no cost to the students as part of their school day experience.

The program is needed for many reasons but the one closest to the school system's mission is support for the student's education.

We found that when the federal government paid for us to feed all students both breakfast and lunch at no cost to them, many good things happened in the school environment such as a significant reduction in discipline referrals, better attendance, less tardiness, more ability to focus on and participate in classes, improved test scores and improved diet quality. These positive outcomes are also happening in the 8 states already providing these meals at state expense according to the multiple studies of these programs.

I urge you to vote for passage of this bill for the wellbeing of all Maryland students. The bill is providing a way to raise the money to support passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony and to express my strong support for HB 1469.

Sincerely,
Cherie Cotsonas, President Elect
Maryland School Nutrition Association