



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

S.B. 929, AN ACT EXPANDING SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE FREE SCHOOL MEALS TO ALL STUDENTS

Senator Maher, Representative Linehan and members of the Committee on Children,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of S.B. 929, An Act Expanding School Meal Programs to Provide Free School Meals to All Students. My name is Greg Brisco and I am the CEO of the Northwestern Connecticut YMCA and Chair of Fit Together, the Torrington/ Winsted initiative that for 11 years has been working to create healthier schools, work places and communities.

I support this legislation because children cannot succeed unless they have proper nutrition. School meals for all ensure students can get a nutritional meal every day to help their physical and mental health.

Studies show that when schools serve no-cost meals for all, there is less absenteeism, more focus, and students feel safer in the cafeteria. Without a nutritious and well-balanced lunch, a child may feel sluggish and tired. When a child is hungry, it can cause a headache, irritability, and fatigue.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative learning effect on our kids. Kids need all the help they can get in catching up to their learning loss. Eating lunch is a key part of staying healthy, happy and doing well in school. I urge you to support this legislation to support Connecticut's children.

Sincerely,

Greg Brisco
CEO