

Sen. Taylor: Statement on “lunch shaming” bill

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MADISON – Today, the Assembly Committee on Education heard testimony on AB 84 relating to imposing requirements related to school lunch and breakfast programs in certain schools. Representative Gary Tauchen (R – Bonduel) introduced AB 84 and Senator Lena Taylor (D-Milwaukee) introduced the senate companion bill. In response to today’s hearing, Sen. Taylor released the following statement:

“No child in a Wisconsin public school should be denied a lunch or be offered a lesser quality meal due to an outstanding lunch balance. We are aware that there are incidents of “lunch shaming” that have occurred in school districts, both in Wisconsin and around the country. The shaming includes having trays taken away while students were eating, being given a cold lunch vs. hot, or being told to step out of the lunch line and more. Bottom line, this is unacceptable.

In the hearing, it was said that it is not the state’s job to write school policy. However, I think most would agree that children should not bear the brunt of this particular policy problem. The adults – parents, administrators and the state – need to figure this out. There were also discussions in the hearing about life lessons, accountability, etc. or to question if the word “shaming” is being overblown. I think there are mental health professionals that are better suited to respond to those comments. However, I don’t think it’s the responsibilities of children to figure this out. I am hopeful that the bulk of my colleagues will agree.”