

# Reps. Shelton, Hong, Sen. Larson, Democratic Colleagues: Introduce the Wisconsin Healthy School Meals for All Act

Posted on Thursday, Nov 18, 2021

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PULASKI – From the Glenbrook Elementary School cafeteria, **State Reps Kristina Shelton** (D – Green Bay), **Francesca Hong** (D – Madison) and **State Senator Chris Larson** (D – Milwaukee), along with **State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly** introduced the Wisconsin Healthy Meals for All Act. LRB 4605 intends to provide state aid to reimburse public and private schools that provide free meals to all pupils for the costs of those meals and make an appropriation. This would include schools that participate in both the federal breakfast and lunch programs, which require meeting a certain set of nutritional guidelines in order to receive reimbursement. On the bill’s release, **Representative Shelton** stated:

“For years, too many children have been left behind by the way our school meal programs have been structured. There are many hungry kids who’ve fallen between the cracks. Healthy School Meals for All helps all children get the nutrition they need to succeed both in school and out of school and to help build strong, resilient communities. The Healthy School Meals for All Act will not only feed more kids, but support student health and wellness, invest in the food service industry, create jobs through local economic development, and support farmers and growers.”

“As a mom, chef and legislator I know first-hand the importance of building community through food. And what must be our core value in Wisconsin is that no child should go hungry because a guardian in their life cannot afford a school meal.

All across this state, from our farmers and teachers to our students and school staff, we have learned that we must provide our children with more support during the school day. We can send a message of care by ensuring that every kid has access to a filling and healthy meal. As legislators, as administrators, as those who care deeply about our students, ensuring that they have this support is ensuring that they are cared for,” **Representative Hong** added.

The Senate lead on the legislation, **Senator Larson** shared:

“This legislation will not only have a direct positive impact on our students but also on our communities. As we invest in our children, we are also investing in our family farmers and operators. This proposed expansion of the school meals program will provide much-needed local family-sustaining jobs while offering expanded opportunities in Wisconsin’s agricultural sector. It is expected that every dollar spent on local food generates over two dollars in local economic activity. The return on investment this legislation offers is essential for our communities.”

“Every child should have the opportunity to learn without worrying about where their next meal will come from. What keeps me up at night is knowing the number of children who are going to bed hungry in Milwaukee. That’s why I have introduced legislation [at the federal level] to provide universal school meals and strongly support Representative Shelton, Representative Hong, Senator Larson, and State Superintendent Underly in their efforts to fight child hunger in our state,” said **U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore (D - Milwaukee)**.