



The Rhode Island State
Council of Churches

April 28, 2026

Ms. Patricia A. Serpa
State Representative, District 27
State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: In Favor of "Healthy School Meals for All", H 7793.

Dear Representative Serpa:

As one of your constituents and Vice President of the Rhode Island State Council of Churches, I am urging you to support and enact the above referenced bill.

Children do not choose the circumstances into which they are born. Yet, they bring their circumstances with them into the classroom. Children in poverty bring silent burdens which often include hunger. Hunger has immediate destructive physical consequences on a child. A hungry child is not physically prepared to learn.

Religious and ethical traditions across all cultures instruct us to feed the hungry. The recent SNAP Crisis during the U.S. Government Shutdown showed us how vulnerable we are regarding food insecurity. There's a moral simplicity in feeding the hungry. It does not require elaborate justification. It requires only that we recognize the sacredness of each life...the preciousness of each life and act accordingly.

Increasing access to school meals will alleviate hunger in our State, particularly in the 40% of RI households with at least one child that is food insecure. (2025 RI Life Index). The moral calculation we face is not whether we can afford to feed our children but whether we can afford not to. I urge your support for this bill.

Respectfully,
/s/ Roberto H. Rodriguez, Jr.
19 Royal Drive
West Warwick, RI 02893