



State of Rhode Island
Lieutenant Governor Sabina Matos

March 4, 2026
Senator Hanna M. Gallo
Chair, Senate Education Committee
82 Smith St, Room 313
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Letter of Support for S 2635: An Act Relating To Education -- Federal Aid

Dear Senator Gallo:

I write to you in enthusiastic support for each S 2635: An Act Relating to Education -- Federal Aid. This bill will end transaction fees for school lunches across all districts in the state. We have known for decades that access to healthy, nutritious food directly impacts a student's academic performance and emotional well-being. Sadly, for far too many students in this state, the meals they eat at school constitute the only stable food source they can rely upon. We learned during the State House's Food Insecurity Day that nearly 1-in-3 Rhode Island families currently experience food insecurity.

With the rising costs of groceries nationwide, school lunches offer a more affordable way for students to eat compared to a packed lunch from home. However, added fees at the lunch line checkout counter add costs prohibitive to many working-class, low-income families. What's worse is that many of these fees have nothing to do with processing payments for school meals and instead can be used to generate extra profit.

S 2635 addresses this problem by requiring that all public schools and districts must provide at least one fee-free method to pay for school meals, which is in line with current federal regulation. I am in support of this bill and urge you to vote it favorably out of committee.

Sincerely,

Sabina Matos

Rhode Island Lieutenant Governor