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Testimony in support of S 2083

May 18, 2026

Honorable Chairperson DiPalma and the members of the Senate Committee on Finance:

I am the founder and president of Eat Drink RI, one of the top media and marketing companies in the region for all things culinary. As an advocate for our food system, a small business owner who wants to see our state's food and drink economy thrive, and as a citizen concerned about our changing climate and food insecurity, **I strongly support S 2083.**

Every year the RI Community Food Bank releases an annual status report on hunger, and every year it's shocking to see the number of children in Rhode Island who go hungry. One out of every five children in our state are food insecure. Among the many health problems that result from hunger, a lack of focus and comprehension can be hugely detrimental to a child's future.

It's extremely difficult for anyone to focus and learn when their bellies are empty, and worse, when they're thinking about how to get their next meal, or if there even is one. Teachers have reported discipline issues are higher with food insecure children, and studies have shown that students who've had a good breakfast and lunch are less disruptive and have a better school day experience for themselves and their classmates.

Thank you to Senator Acosta and his co-sponsors on S 2083. Respectfully, I urge you to pass S 2083 forward to the full Senate for passage this session. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David Dadekian