

Representative Maxine Dibert
State Capitol Room 128
Juneau, AK. 99801

February 17, 2025



Dear Honorable Representative Dibert,

On behalf of Twitter Creek Gardens, I am writing to thank you for introducing House Bill 12 and to express my full support. School nutrition programs are imperative to the well-being of our youth, and fostering support of healthy families throughout Alaska.

I have spent the last 25 years working in different capacities with our school districts. During this time, I have witnessed that most of our school-aged children rely on school lunch programs to feed them throughout the day. Food and nutrition are an essential element to power brains to learn. Without a reliable school based meal program, far too many of our youth will be hungry, preventing the basic tools to participate in school.

It is well known that access to nutritious meals correlate directly to cognitive function and improved learning abilities. Providing these meals at our Alaskan schools makes an investment not only in the day to day well-being of our youth, but an investment in the future health of our communities.

Alaska faces one of the most unique food distribution landscapes in our nation. Freight costs are extreme, spoilage rates are high, and cost of living for our rural families is ever growing. If we can help by ensuring meals in schools, we can create an equitable learning environment for communities, regardless of location.

Many years ago, I visited Venetie, a small village in the Yukon Flats School District, with just over 100 residents. Every morning, the teacher would provide a school breakfast. Without it, she expressed that children wouldn't show up for school. Food = incentive = attendance = increased learning = greater chances to thrive in the future. Feeding our children through school based nutrition programs is an absolute necessity.

Thank you for introducing this bill and for your dedication to healthy youth and healthy families across Alaska. I appreciate your leadership in making Alaska a better landscape for our students to learn and grow.

You have my full support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emily Garrity". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Emily" being more prominent than the last name "Garrity".

Emily Garrity
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