

February 14, 2025

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

Dear Representative Dibert.

On behalf of the kids of Alaska, thank you for introducing House Bill 12. I whole-heartedly support House Bill 12. As you undoubtedly know, students who are hungry cannot learn, grow, and succeed. Without breakfast, students are trying to run their complex bodies and brains on empty. Consistent access to nutritious meals is linked to better grades and overall academic achievement. Reduced absenteeism is another educational benefit of House Bill 12. Hungry students are more likely to be tardy or absent. Regular meals help improve attendance, ensuring students are in class and ready to learn.

Investing in meals is an investment in education. Providing meals is not a matter of charity, it's a strategic investment in the most important infrastructure of Alaska, kids in school. The future success of Alaska is dependent on Alaskan kids reaching their best potential, and House Bill 12 significantly helps with that goal. In addition, offering meals to all students eliminates stigma and ensures that everyone benefits.

Thank you for championing this important policy proposal. Students cannot reach their full potential if they are hungry. House Bill 12 is transformational and will improve Alaska student well-being and outcomes, which will make the future of Alaska brighter indeed.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Hirschfeld", is written on a light blue rectangular background.

Matthew Hirschfeld, MD/PhD  
Pediatrician  
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