

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Session

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State Affairs Committee

Judiciary Committee

In-State Energy Committee

Joint Armed Services
Committee

SENATOR BILL WIELECHOWSKI

Sponsor Statement

Senate Bill 6 – Funding for School Meals

“An Act providing for funding for school lunch and breakfast.”

Senate Bill 6 will provide a state match for schools participating in the federal Free and Reduced Price School Breakfast and Lunch Program. This legislation will encourage more schools to provide nutritious meals for underprivileged children and allow schools that already do so to improve their programs. Currently in Alaska, twenty percent of schools participating in the school lunch program do not offer school breakfast, impacting 22,253 Alaskan children, 6,850 of whom are children from low income families who qualify for free or reduced price meals. For many children, these are the only nutritious meals they will get on a regular basis.

This legislation will provide school districts with a base amount of 35 cents for each breakfast served and 15 cents per lunch. To compensate for higher costs, rural schools will receive additional assistance through a funding formula based on the applicable School District Cost Factor for each district.

In addition to fighting childhood hunger, investing in school meals has shown to improve school performance, attendance and test scores while reducing violence and combating childhood obesity.

This legislation is supported by the Food Bank of Alaska, the Alaska Food Coalition and the Alaska School Nutrition Association. It has been endorsed by numerous school districts across the state, Alaska Federation of Natives, Action for Healthy Kids, City of Kenai and the Mountain View Community Council.