

**Statement Submitted for the Record**  
**United States Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry**  
**Committee Print: Improving Child Nutrition Integrity and Access Act of 2016**  
**Wednesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

I want to thank Chairman Roberts and Ranking Member Stabenow for their leadership on this important issue. This committee continues to work in a bipartisan and productive manner on important issues like reducing childhood hunger and improving nutrition.

I believe that our country has no greater asset than the next generation of young people—smart, talented kids who will inherit our country, and I believe will make it stronger. In order to help our children reach their full potential, we have an obligation to provide them with every opportunity to succeed both inside and outside the classroom. Yet for too many American children, this incredible potential is limited by food insecurity. That is why keeping Hoosier children healthy and fed is an important priority for me. I am glad to see three particular provisions in this legislation that will work for Hoosier families.

Statewide, about 50 percent of Hoosier students qualify for free- or reduced-price lunches, but of these kids, only about 18 percent are getting summer meals. I met and played basketball with some of the students participating in the summer meals program at home in Indiana. The improvements to the program in this bill will make it easier to feed these children, and others like them, by creating new ways to get food to those who need it the most. Areas with large numbers of students who can't make it to summer meals sites will have increased flexibility to deliver or send meals home with students. Other areas that choose to do so can implement options to support meals at home.

Secondly, this bill will allow schools in Indiana to continue to work toward achieving important nutrition standards, but will be able to do so with a little more flexibility if that's what they need. This legislation will allow lunchrooms to serve whole grain-rich items four days per week with extra options on the fifth day. School lunches will continue to reduce salt content, but lunchrooms will have some extra time to find the right foods for their students in meeting this requirement. I'm glad we could come together to find a balance between healthy and delicious lunches for Hoosier students.

Finally, more schools in Indiana will be able to serve healthy snacks to students throughout the day with this bill's improvements to the fruits and vegetables snack program. Schools in need who have wanted to participate in this program, but haven't had the resources needed previously, can now enter the fruits and vegetables snack program and provide all forms of snacks, while getting the assistance they need to permanently participate in the program.

I am proud of the important work on legislation done by this committee and look forward to continue working together to get this bill enacted into law.

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