

April 15, 2015

Senator Susan Collins
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Heidi Heitkamp
502 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Collins and Heitkamp:

We write to express our strong support for the **S. 540, the School Food Modernization Act**. We appreciate your leadership in advancing this important legislation.

As the legislation you have sponsored recognizes, American schools are actively working to provide increasingly healthy and appealing meal offerings, but too many school kitchens were built decades ago without adequate capacity for procuring, storing, refrigerating, preparing and serving the foods they'd like to offer today. Many schools need improved equipment or infrastructure for activities such as baking, cooling and scratch cooking. In addition, making changes to school meals requires increased training and technical assistance that is often not accessible to the school nutrition workforce.

The School Food Modernization Act gives school districts and food service administrators the tools and resources they need to prepare meals that meet updated nutrition standards and provide wholesome, delicious meals that children will enjoy. The bill provides loan guarantees for kitchen infrastructure and equipment upgrades, authorizes grants for small but critical equipment purchases, and supports innovative training opportunities to strengthen the school food service workforce. This legislation is particularly important because the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that as many as one-third of U.S. students are already overweight or obese, putting them at increased risk for serious lifelong diseases. We know that American children spend more time in school than anywhere outside of their homes, and the choices they make during the school day can influence their health over a lifetime. Now more than ever, it is vital to help our schools provide healthy choices for all children.

We applaud your efforts on behalf of America's school children, and we look forward to working with you to help advance this important legislative initiative.

Sincerely yours,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Action for Healthy Kids
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Sports Dietitians and Nutritionists

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance
American Public Health Association
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
American Institute for Cancer Research
Association of School Business Officials
Association of State Public Health Nutritionists
California Association of Nutrition & Activity
California Center for Public Health Advocacy
California Food Policy Advocates
Campbell Soup Company
Cargill, Incorporated
Center for Communications, Health, & the Environment
Center for Science in the Public Interest
ChangeLab Solutions
The Dannon Company, Inc.
Defeat Diabetes Foundation
D'fine Sculpting and Nutrition LLC
Earth Day Network
Farm Sanctuary
First Focus Campaign for Children
Food Family Farming Foundation (F3)
Foodservice Consultants Society International - The Americas Division
The Food Trust
Genesee Dietetic Association
Globe Food Equipment Company
Healthy Schools Campaign
Illinois Tool Works, Inc.
Iowa Public Health Association
Kansas City Healthy Kids
Let's Talk About Food, LLC
LTI (Low Temp Industries)
Mars, Inc.
National Action Against Obesity
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Consumers League
National Farm to School Network
National PTA
National Research Center for Women and Families
NC Prevention Partners
Nestlé
New Jersey Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance
Nutrition First
Oregon Public Health Institute
Parents Educators and Advocates Connection for Healthy School Food

Partnership for Prevention
Pennsylvania Action for Healthy Kids
Pennsylvania Business Council
The Pew Charitable Trusts
Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Real Food For Kids - Fairfax
Real Food For Kids - Montgomery
School Food FOCUS National Office
Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior
United Fresh Produce Association
Winston Industries