



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Cosponsor H.R. 1783 – the School Food Modernization Act

Dear Colleague:

According to the CDC, more than 23 million children in the United States – one in three young people – are either overweight or obese. Childhood obesity has more than doubled in children and tripled in adolescents in the past 30 years.

This has enormous implications for the well-being of our youth, the budget – and even national security. The U.S. military is finding it increasingly difficult to find recruits with the physical fitness to qualify for service. Ultimately, the solution to the childhood obesity epidemic in our nation is a culture that embraces healthy lifestyle habits, including healthy eating and physical activity.

Schools play a particularly critical role in this. They provide the only full meal – school lunch – many children eat in a day, and they also provide an environment where students can learn about and practice healthy eating and physical activity. Most schools want to expand healthy food choices and give kids more nutritious offerings, but times are tough and financing for the needed kitchen upgrades is difficult to obtain.

To help meet this need, we have introduced the School Food Modernization Act (SMFA), which:

- Directs the USDA to provide loan assistance to schools, through the Commodity Credit Corporation, to remodel or expand their kitchens, cafeterias, or food storage infrastructure, helping them to obtain low-risk, long-term financing in the private sector.
- Authorizes targeted grant assistance from existing funds to help school administrators and food service directors purchase storage and preparation equipment for fresh food.
- Authorizes the USDA to provide technical assistance and training to school food service personnel to prepare healthier meals.

We hope you'll join us in helping our kids stay healthy and ready to learn. For more information, or to co-sponsor, please contact Jacob Parker with Rep. Latham (jacob.parker@mail.house.gov) at 5-5476 or Blair Milligan with Rep. McIntyre (blair.milligan@mail.house.gov) at 5-2731.



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