



STATE SENATOR
EDNA BROWN

11TH DISTRICT

Sponsor Testimony
Senators Edna Brown & Peggy Lehner
Senate Finance Committee
May 3, 2016

Chairman Oelslager, Ranking Member Skindell, and fellow members of the Senate Finance Committee: thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 247.

The inspiration and need for this bill boils down to a very simple reality; childhood hunger in Ohio does not end when school is no longer in session. Yet, access to nutrition programs administered through the schools *does* end when the school buildings are no longer available.

Schools are often the center of neighborhoods and are already convenient locations for children to access. Senate Bill 247 will require schools to be available as summer feeding sites in areas where 50% or more of the local children qualify for summer meal programs. By taking advantage of these conveniently accessible locations, we can open up new opportunities for food programs to meet the needs of the children who depend on them during the school year *and* over the summer.

Schools could provide the meals themselves or explore partnerships with local governments, faith-based providers or nonprofits to aid in the delivery of nutritious meals.

Senate Bill 247 includes a revision to current Ohio law which prevents children from eating while on a school bus. This revision would permit school districts to use a stationary school bus as a place where children can consume their meals. Once one group of children has finished their meals and exited the bus, it could be moved to another location, creating a mobile feeding site to help meet the unique nutritional needs in each neighborhood.

The proposed law would also create a new food license for childcare programs which would allow them to offer fresh produce. Currently, in order to serve fresh produce some providers are required to secure the same commercial food license needed by supermarkets and restaurants.

In 2013, Governor Kasich issued an executive order authorizing the expenditure of 1.5 million dollars in Temporary Assistance for Needy Family funds to be used to help combat childhood hunger. In doing so, Governor Kasich recognized that this is a problem that needs to be addressed. I believe that Senate Bill 247 is a component of that effort and I look forward to continuing to work on childhood nutrition with all interested parties.

Chairman— ladies and gentlemen of the Committee— I hope you will give favorable consideration to Senate Bill 247 because children's hunger does not take a summer break.

I will be happy to answer any questions that the Committee may have at this time.

