

January 22, 2025
Jayme Morris-Hardeman
USD 383 Manhattan/Ogden Board of Education
Written Testimony in Opposition to ~~26rs2581~~ SB 387
Senate Committee on Government Efficiency

Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to this bill.

I am the President of the USD 383 Manhattan/Ogden Board of Education and a parent of a student at Manhattan High School. In our district, 47% of students are eligible for free or reduced school meals, and this access to nutritious school meals is essential for the students' ability to learn. I am particularly concerned about the limit to our district's ability to use the Community Eligibility Provision, which provides access to nutritious meals to all students in our schools with children from families with the greatest financial struggles. These changes add unnecessary paperwork, increase stigma for students, and shift focus away from education and toward bureaucracy. Schools already follow federal rules to determine eligibility, and the Community Eligibility Provision has been shown to work by reducing red tape while ensuring kids have access to nutritious meals.

Decisions about how to feed students should be left to schools and communities, not require additional legislative approval. Kansas should be focused on protecting access to school meals and maximizing federal nutrition dollars that support our children and local economies.

I respectfully urge you to oppose this bill and protect school meals for Kansas students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jayme Morris-Hardeman

President, USD 383 Manhattan/Ogden Board of Education