



January 23, 2026

Elizabeth Keever, Chief Resource Officer, Harvesters—The Community Food Network
Kansas Food Bank
Second Harvest Community Food Bank
Testimony in opposition to SB 387

Chairman Erickson and members of the Committee:

This testimony is submitted on behalf of Harvesters—The Community Food Network, the Kansas Food Bank and Second Harvest Community Food Bank, which together serve our neighbors experiencing food insecurity in all 105 counties in the state. Last year, our networks of charitable food partners distributed more than 46 million pounds of food to those in need in Kansas, from our smallest rural communities to major metropolitan areas.

We are in opposition to 26rs2581 because it would result in more children in Kansas facing hunger. Already 18.4% of Kansas kids—nearly 1 in 5—don't know where their next meal is coming from. This bill would create new barriers for kids and limit access to school meals they rely on, which harms their health, their learning and their futures. Every day, school social workers tell us how important these meals are to students' health and their ability to succeed in school. They often tell us the only way to ensure a child gets three meals a day is through nutritious school meals.

Kansas families are struggling. Food prices are up 30% over the last five years and they continue to rise, well outpacing wage increases. Just last month, in December 2025, food prices recorded their largest jump since late 2022. For low-income families, food accounts for 30% of their monthly income and these price increases are making it more and more difficult for working families to feed their children.

Kansas food banks are acutely aware of the increased cost of food, which is driving more and more people to our partner agencies for food assistance. The charitable sector is working hard to make sure that food-insecure families and children have access to the nutritious food they need, but we are stretched thin trying to keep up with the current need. If access to school meals is reduced either through onerous income verification processes or the reduction of school access to the Community Eligibility Provision, our food pantries do not have the resources to fill in those gaps.

When President Harry Truman signed the National School Lunch Act into law in 1946, he said, "Nothing is more important to our national life than the welfare of our children, and proper nourishment comes first in attaining this welfare. The well-nourished school child is a better student. He is healthier and more alert. He is developing good food habits which will benefit him for the rest of his life. In short, he is a better asset for his country in every way."

We knew this in 1946, and we know it today. Nutrition for kids is imperative for their future, and for our country's future. We encourage you to vote no on 26rs2581. Kansas kids deserve better.