

# Rhode Island's Healthy School Meals for All Initiative

We urge the passage of HB5742 and SB430, offering free breakfast and lunch to all Rhode Island public school students. Every Rhode Island student should have access to nutritious school meals.

**This bill is crucial to improve educational outcomes and equity, alleviate hunger, and better the health of our children.**

- ACADEMIC SUCCESS**  
Aligns with our state's commitment to educational excellence and the well-being of our children.
- EQUITY & DIGNITY**  
Reduces stigma around eating school meals, eliminates meal debt carried by families and schools, and offers meals students are proud to eat
- ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**  
Supports families across income levels with access to free meals while ensuring these dollars circulate in our state's economy through local purchasing of local agricultural products.
- EDUCATION & HEALTH**  
Guarantees every child is well-fed during the school day, addressing the direct link between nutrition, academic performance, and health.

**68%** of Rhode Islanders support free lunches for all K-12 students.



## ADDRESSING HUNGER & EQUITY

Around 38% of RI households are food insecure. There are hungry children in every school district.

## INVESTING IN OUR CHILDREN & ECONOMY

More participation in school meals supports local businesses and higher food quality.

## LEARNING FROM THE PANDEMIC

The successful USDA-funded free meal program during the pandemic demonstrated the positive impact of universal free school meals.

## ADDRESSING FEDERAL INACTION

With the lack of federal policy-making, states like Massachusetts, Maine, and seven others have stepped up. Rhode Island needs to lead the way to feed all our children!

2025

# GOOD FOOD

# POLICY AGENDA



## Urban and small farm tax burden relief

We urge the passage of HB5534 and SB431, exempting certain urban and small farms from specific state taxes. All Rhode Island farmers deserve a fair chance to succeed.



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## Surplus food waste donation tax credit

SB2757/HB7995 will create a tax credit for qualified taxpayers who donate food to RI organizations.



## Support for local composting

We urge the passage of HB5195 and SB104, establishing a Compost Fund to support composting through a surcharge on all landfill bound waste. Rhode Island has a choice – waste or wealth?



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