

ODETTE RAMOS

Councilwoman District 14



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Testimony
21-0053R – Informational Hearing – School Lunches
Position: Support

Chair Stokes and Members of the Education, Workforce, and Youth Committee:

I am writing to introduce 21-0053R – Informational hearing – School Lunches.

This issue came to me through one of my constituents who you will hear from at the hearing. She is an 11th grader at ACCE School. She is very concerned about the quality of the lunches. Every student in Baltimore City Schools are eligible for free lunch and should have good meals to ensure they have energy for the day.

As I started talking with her and her fellow students, it became more clear to me that students care deeply about this issue for many reasons, including but not limited to:

- Students don't feel the lunches are nutritious enough.
- Students don't eat the lunch and then went to the snack machine to get filled up, thus having unhealthy meals.
- If students have other dietary needs, there are few substitutes.
- In today's school setting with masks to avoid COVID, some students refuse to eat in lunchrooms because everyone is eating with their masks off. Students feel unsafe.

During the hearing you will hear from students about their experiences, and also see photos of the current lunches. Experts and advocates will also be sharing their insights.

During this session we hope to gain your support for needed changes at the city, state, and federal levels to:

- Ensure that students have more of a voice in their school lunch choices,
- Allocate more funding for school lunches, and
- Remove regulatory limitations.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to our students' needs.

Respectfully Submitted:

Odette Ramos
Baltimore City Councilwoman, District 14