

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) states that the average daily student participation rate for total lunches served began to decline as the school lunches began to become healthier. Fellow senators, I stand in negation of this bill to create healthier school lunches because of the following three reasons: students do not choose the healthier option when in the school lunch line, there are not enough calories to support growing teen's metabolisms, and the schools will save money.

I will start off by saying that many students do not choose the healthier option when selecting their lunch. They tend to select what appeals to their eyes. Julia Bauscher, the president-elect of the School Nutrition Association and school-nutrition director at Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville, Kentucky, affirms, "The bigger the difference between what the students were accustomed to seeing on their serving line..., the more difficult it was for the school food-service director to address the needs and concerns of the students." For instance, schools began to start dyeing applesauce bright green to draw students to grab it in the lunch line. This ultimately defeats the purpose of advertising the lunch as "healthy" and "natural" when schools begin adding chemicals to enhance the presentation of their food.

Secondly, stricter school lunch standards lead to active teens receiving an insufficient amount of recommended daily calories. In January of 2012, the USDA enacted guidelines which eliminated full-fat milk and reduced total calories on menus. This resulted in students complaining that the school lunch does not satisfy their hunger.

Finally, if this bill is approved, schools will lose money. Students are not buying the healthier options in the cafeteria, which leads to a drop in revenue for schools. The USDA pays schools back about \$2.39 per lunch served to a student eligible for free meals. However, there are higher costs to feed students healthier meals that adhere to the new nutrition guidelines that are not covered by this reimbursement. "...districts... free and reduced percentage could be as low as 5% of the students, which means that all they are getting for the reimbursable meal is 30 cents," Bauscher expresses, "If they had previously not offered a lot of whole grains or fruits and vegetables, or their students didn't choose them, there was a significant increase in cost of providing the meals."

So, in conclusion, I urge your negation of this bill because students do not select the healthier lunch option, there are not enough calories to support active teens, and the schools will preserve money. By not creating healthier school lunches, students will be more likely to eat and enjoy their lunch and schools will preserve money, which can be used to improve the school's other aspects. I now yield my time to the floor.

10-year-old Jasmine McClain committed suicide due to unremittingly getting bullied about her clothes and her shoes. Fellow senators, I rise to the affirmative of this bill to mandate school uniforms because of the following three reasons: students will focus more on education, students will be seen as equal, and school pride and unity will be encouraged.

Firstly, students will be able to focus more on education, rather than what others are wearing. A bulletin published by the National Association of Secondary School Principals stated that "When all students are wearing the same outfit, they are less concerned about how they look and how they fit in with their peers; thus, they can concentrate on their schoolwork." A 2010 University of Houston study found that after uniforms were introduced, school girls' language test scores increased by about three percentile points.

Secondly, students will all be seen as equal, regardless of their financial status. When all students are dressed alike, competition between students over how expensive or fashionable their outfits are can be eliminated. This will significantly decrease bullying and surge self-confidence. Armintha Jacobson, Founder and Director of the Center for Parent Education at the University of North Texas, stated that uniforms put "all kids on the same playing field in terms of their appearance." Students who cannot afford pricey outfits will no longer have to feel self-conscious or embarrassed of their financial status.

Finally, school uniforms encourage school pride and unity. A 2007 study from Oxford Brookes University in the United Kingdom found that uniforms "often directly contributed to a feeling of school pride." When wearing the same outfit as others at school, students feel unified. Arnold Goldstein, PhD, head of the Center for Research on Aggression at Syracuse University, affirms that uniforms help troubled students feel they have the support of a community: "There is a sense of belonging."

So, in conclusion, I urge all of congress to join me in affirming this bill because it increases students' focus on education, students will be seen as equal, and pride and unity will be encouraged. By enacting this bill, students will be in a more positive and friendly environment, ultimately leading to more success. I now yield my time to the floor.