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## Luther S. Olsen

State Senator

14th District

**TO:** Senate Committee on Education  
**FROM:** Senator Luther Olsen  
**DATE:** Tuesday, December 19, 2017  
**SUBJECT:** Testimony for Senate Bill 159

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Thank you members of the Senate Committee on Education for holding a hearing and allowing me to testify in support of Senate Bill 159 (SB 159).

Studies show that nutrition and healthy eating habits that are established early in life tend to carry on throughout our lives. This bill will update the nutrition education standards we currently have in place. It updates the nutrition education standards to include instruction on the nutritive value of foods as outlined in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, an evidence-based publication by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

After hearing the concerns from a few stakeholders we have offered an amendment that removes section two of the bill, so it will no longer require nutrition as a component to graduate. It still requires students to learn and understand the value of foods and the role a nutritious diet has in promoting healthy habits, preventing chronic disease, and maintaining a healthy weight. This bill does not mandate how the information is to be delivered or how much time needs to be spent teaching it, we wanted to leave those decisions up to the schools. The purpose of this legislation is to ensure that all students are receiving this important information.

Childhood obesity rates have tripled since the 1970s and the rate of diabetes has been steadily increasing as well. It is our hope that the nutrition education act we have put together will promote healthy habits by educating children on the importance it has on our lives.

Again, thank you for holding a hearing today. I ask for your support on SB 159 and I would be more than happy to answer any questions.



## **School Administrators Alliance**

*Representing the Interests of Wisconsin School Children*

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**TO:** Senate Committee on Education  
**FROM:** John Forester, Executive Director  
**DATE:** December 19, 2017  
**RE:** SB 159 – Education About Nutrition

The School Administrators Alliance (SAA) is opposed to Senate Bill 159, relating to education about nutrition, as it is currently drafted.

SB 159 essentially does three things. It requires the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to modify its nutrition education standards to include knowledge of the nutritive value of foods and the role of a nutritious diet in promoting health. The bill also requires school boards to change their instruction about nutrition to conform to the new DPI nutrition education standards. Finally, the bill would require that a nutrition education component be incorporated into the health education class, which is a requirement for high school graduation.

In anticipation of this hearing, I sought input on SB 159 from a broad cross-section of SAA members. I'd like to share with you their key thoughts on the bill. As a preface, I would like to share that SAA members in general believe that the intent behind the bill – promoting health, preventing chronic disease, and battling obesity – is laudable.

Nearly all the SAA members I consulted with recoiled at the requirement in Section 2 of the bill that a nutrition education component be incorporated into the health education class, which is a requirement for high school graduation. They fear that every time we add a mandate something else needs to be watered down to meet the mandate. They believe that local educators and local school boards, operating within the broad parameters established by the state and federal government, are in the best position to determine the instructional programming that best meets the unique educational needs of the children in their communities.

I have worked with the authors on Senate Amendment 1, which removes Section 2 of the bill. If this amendment is adopted, the SAA will remove its opposition to the bill.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. If you should have any questions on our thoughts on SB 159, please call me at 608-242-1370.

Date 12/19/2017

Name: Diane Agrell

### The Nutrition Education Act Testimony

Good Morning Chairman Olsen and members of the Senate Committee on Education. My name is Diane Agrell and I work as a Nutrition Director at the Winneconne School District. I have over 18 years of experience as a school nutrition professional and I have been working at Winneconne School District since 1999. I am also the current President of the School Nutrition Association of WI. In my District, I feed on an average of about 900 lunches each day with a Free & Reduce rate of around 15%. We have a fruit and vegetable bar in each of the school which we allow students unlimited access to. We also purchase as much local produce as we have available to us. The food products that we purchase follow the USDA guidelines with lower sodium and fat level. I also look for products that are have clean labels without additives and organic products when available. A typical day for me is spent ordering products for the next week, paying invoices , planning the next month's menus, looking for new products that I feel the students may like and then putting those products and recipes into the nutritional software program I have to make sure they fit the USDA weekly requirements. I also try to visit each school on a daily basis to make sure the food that is being serve looks appealing and that recipes are being followed, and also that correct sanitation codes are being followed. I enjoy this part of my day the most. Over the years I have seem a noticeable increase in fruit and vegetable consumption not just because they have to take it but because they really enjoy eating it. Just recently I had one elementary student tell me he would like for me to put hummus on the bar. I thought to myself up until about five years ago I didn't even know what hummus was.

I am here today to express my support for Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 159, known as The Nutrition Education Act. Based upon my professional experience, I am very familiar with nutrition and how it can lead to healthy and productive lives, as well as unhealthy and unproductive lives. This holds to be even more true when habits are instilled at a young age.

Schools are in a unique position to promote healthy eating and effective nutrition education can lead to greater academic success for students and benefit them far beyond the classroom. That's why the Nutrition Education Act updates the state's nutrition education standards to include instruction on the nutritive value of foods, as outlined in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and the importance of a nutritious diet in promoting health, preventing chronic disease, and maintaining a healthy weight.

Amendment 1 removes a section of the bill that incorporates a nutrition education component into the health education credit that is currently required for graduation from high school. By removing that section, the bill allows schools to choose the manner in which nutrition education is taught.

Mr. Chair and members of the committee; this bill makes sense for so many reasons. We know we have an obesity problem in Wisconsin and across the country. We also know it is not exclusive to adults or children. The best way to combat this problem is through nutrition education in the classroom. I am confident the results from educating young people about nutrition and healthy eating habits will not only make Wisconsin kids healthier today, but also help them to develop responsible and healthy eating habits as adults tomorrow.

Thank you again for allowing me the chance to testify in support of SB 159, The Nutrition Education Act. As someone with first-hand experience in the nutrition profession that seeks to make people healthier through nutritious food and healthy eating habits, I ask you to support this bill. I'm happy to answer any questions at this time.

Tuesday, December 19, 2017

### Testimony in Support of the Nutrition Education Act

Good Morning Chairman Olsen and members of the Senate Committee on Education. My name is Karen Krchma, I am a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist and Certified in the State of Wisconsin. I am a proud member of the Wisconsin Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (WAND), an organization of more than 1,400 registered dietitians from around the state. Our organization fully supports Senate Bill 159.

Currently I am in private practice in Thiensville Wisconsin. I work with a wide variety of nutrition health challenges focusing on the cause of the health problem. My career in nutrition began when I was quite young helping my grandmother and mother in the restaurants they owned in Milwaukee. After working 12 years as a Dietetic Technician, I was inspired by my mentors to return to school to get a full degree as a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN), and I have over 27 years of experience as a registered dietitian. I have practiced in the hospital setting, long term care, and in mental health. I am married, and have four children.

Aside from working in the medical community, I worked as a teacher aide at a Montessori School which included nutrition education for the youngest children through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. I was also a substitute teacher in the public school, and provided classes for the community recreation department where I taught summer nutrition classes for children in elementary and middle school, as well as nutrition class in the high school alongside the health teacher.

With this vast experience with all age groups, my observations lead me to believe that what children learn about nutrition at an early age reflects how they eat as adults. What people eat influences their health. Their health influences their life in so many ways.

Here are some things that I learned from working with the youngest children; they many times are not exposed to different foods, or even to healthier choices. With age appropriate nutrition education, they open up to new tastes and ideas. Even a few new foods in your diet will make a difference.

Working with middle schoolers has different challenges. However, the opportunity to actually participate in the cooking process makes a huge impact. I have had children in the community come up to me years after teaching a class and tell me they still make that awesome yogurt parfait with fresh berries! Believe me, that is very rewarding!

In high school, participation in the process is necessary to make an impact. However, many children are already experiencing health difficulties, as what we see in obesity, or acne, fatigue, and importantly stress. Most people get their nutrition education from television, or the internet. Discussion of what is real and what is hype while focusing on critical thinking is what will make a difference in the outcome of an education process. This is where the Dietary

Guidelines for Americans as written in SB 159 can be an important resource for nutrition education. I also support Amendment 1 which is before you today.

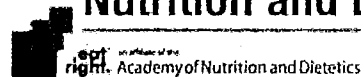
Amendment 1 to SB 159 removes a section of the bill that incorporates a nutrition education component into the health education credit that is currently required for graduation from high school. By removing that section, the bill allows schools the flexibility to choose how nutrition education is taught to students.

Mr. Chair and members of the committee, this bill simply makes sense. We know we have an obesity problem in Wisconsin and it is not exclusive to adults or children. The best way to combat this problem is by using the Dietary Guidelines for Americans in the classroom. Educating young people about nutrition and healthy eating habits will help them to develop responsible and healthy eating habits that they will take with them into adulthood.

Thank you again for allowing me the chance to testify in support of SB 159, The Nutrition Education Act. As someone working in school cafeterias, I know there is a need for this bill and I ask you to support it. Please feel free to ask any questions at this time.



## Wisconsin Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics



### What Are the Dietary Guidelines for Americans?

**The *Dietary Guidelines* is a critical tool for professionals to help Americans make healthy choices in their daily lives to help prevent chronic disease and enjoy a healthy diet.**

The *Dietary Guidelines* is required under the 1990 National Nutrition Monitoring and Related Research Act, which states that every 5 years, the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and of Agriculture (USDA) must jointly publish a report containing nutritional and dietary information and guidelines for the general public. The statute (Public Law 101-445, 7 U.S.C. 5341 et seq.) requires that the Dietary Guidelines be based on the preponderance of current scientific and medical knowledge. The 2015-2020 edition of the Dietary Guidelines builds from the 2010 edition with revisions based on the Scientific Report of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee and consideration of Federal agency and public comments.

The *Dietary Guidelines* is updated every five years and serves as the evidence-based foundation for nutrition education materials that are developed by the Federal Government for the public. For example, Federal dietary guidance publications are required by law to be consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines*. It also is used to inform USDA and HHS food programs, such as USDA's National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, which feed more than 30 million children each school day, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, which uses the *Dietary Guidelines* as the scientific underpinning for its food packages and nutrition education program with about 8 million beneficiaries.

In HHS, the Administration on Aging implements the *Dietary Guidelines* through the Older Americans Act Nutrition Services programs (i.e., nutrition programs for older adults), with about 5,000 community-based nutrition service providers who together serve more than 900,000 meals a day across the United States. Other Departments, such as the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs, also use the Dietary Guidelines to inform programs. The *Dietary Guidelines* also may be used to inform the development of programs, policies, and communication by audiences other than the document's principal audiences. These audiences, who share the common goal of serving the general public, include businesses, schools, community groups, media, the food industry, and State and local governments.

The *2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines* translates science into succinct, food-based guidance that can be relied upon to help Americans choose foods that provide a healthy and enjoyable diet. Its recommendations are ultimately intended to help individuals improve and maintain overall health and reduce the risk of chronic disease—its focus is disease prevention. Regardless of an individual's current health status, almost all people in the United States could benefit from shifting choices to better support healthy eating patterns. Thus, the *Dietary Guidelines* may be used or adapted by medical and nutrition professionals to encourage healthy eating patterns to patients.

**These Guidelines also embody the idea that a healthy eating pattern is not a rigid prescription, but rather, an adaptable framework in which individuals can enjoy foods that meet their personal, cultural, and traditional preferences and fit within their budget. Several examples of healthy eating patterns that translate and integrate the recommendations in overall healthy ways to eat are provided.**

The Guidelines include:

1. Follow a healthy eating pattern across the lifespan. All food and beverage choices matter. Choose a healthy eating pattern at an appropriate calorie level to help achieve and maintain a healthy body weight, support nutrient adequacy, and reduce the risk of chronic disease.
2. Focus on variety, nutrient density, and amount. To meet nutrient needs within calorie limits, choose a variety of nutrient-dense foods across and within all food groups in recommended amounts.
3. Limit calories from added sugars and saturated fats and reduce sodium intake. Consume an eating pattern low in added sugars, saturated fats, and sodium. Cut back on foods and beverages higher in these components to amounts that fit within healthy eating patterns.
4. Shift to healthier food and beverage choices. Choose nutrient-dense foods and beverages across and within all food groups in place of less healthy choices. Consider cultural and personal preferences to make these shifts easier to accomplish and maintain.
5. Support healthy eating patterns for all. Everyone has a role in helping to create and support healthy eating patterns in multiple settings nationwide, from home to school to work to communities.

Key recommendations for a healthy eating pattern include:

1. A variety of vegetables from all of the subgroups—dark green, red and orange, legumes (beans and peas), starchy, and other
2. Fruits, especially whole fruits
3. Grains, at least half of which are whole grains
4. Fat-free or low-fat dairy, including milk, yogurt, cheese, and/or fortified soy beverages
5. A variety of protein foods, including seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas), and nuts, seeds, and soy products
6. Oils

Key Recommendations that are quantitative are provided for several components of the diet that should be limited. These components are of particular public health concern in the United States, and the specified limits can help individuals achieve healthy eating patterns within calorie limits:

1. Consume less than 10 percent of calories per day from added sugars
2. Consume less than 10 percent of calories per day from saturated fats
3. Consume less than 2,300 milligrams (mg) per day of sodium
4. If alcohol is consumed, it should be consumed in moderation—up to one drink per day for women and up to two drinks per day for men—and only by adults of legal drinking age.

In tandem with the recommendations above, Americans of all ages—children, adolescents, adults, and older adults—should meet the *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* to help promote health and reduce the risk of chronic disease. Americans should aim to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight. The relationship between diet and physical activity contributes to calorie balance and managing body weight.

**\*The information contained in this document was accessed and obtained from**

<https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/> **August - September 2017.**