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MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Legislature

From: Assemblywoman Loni Hancock

Date: March 10, 2004

Subject: AB 2200 Co-author Request
Feeding Hungry Minds in Schools

Please join me in ensuring that all children in public schools have access to the benefits of the federal School Breakfast Program by co-authoring AB 2200.

Studies show that a nutritious breakfast is critical to learning during a school day. Children who eat breakfast at school, regardless of family income level, have higher test scores, are tardy and absent less often, have fewer visits to the school nurse, and are better behaved than those who do not eat breakfast. As we work toward improving our children's quality of education, the School Breakfast Program is an inexpensive resource to help children learn. The School Breakfast Program is a prominent strategy in the fight to prevent childhood hunger as well as childhood obesity. There are stringent federal nutrition standards and requirements that combine to make the School Breakfast Program a healthy meal, superior to fast food alternatives and to many home breakfasts.

Currently 25 states have some form of mandate for the School Breakfast Program. Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Vermont and West Virginia require school breakfast in all public schools, while Florida and New York require school breakfast in all public elementary schools. Educators, parents, and politicians in these states realize the importance of good nutrition for educational success and see mandating school breakfast programs as key to achieving academic goals.

In California, there are more than 1,400 schools that do not serve breakfast. Because of this, California ranks 32nd in the nation for feeding breakfast to students. By increasing the number of schools and the number of children participating in school breakfast, California can bring in hundreds of millions of dollars in federal resources over the school year.

AB 2200 will require the following:

- All public schools with the National School Lunch Program to serve breakfast through the School Breakfast Program.
- As a means of increasing the participation in school breakfast, various program options will be promoted including but not limited to: Universal Classroom Breakfast, Second Chance Breakfast, and Grab-and-Go.
- New schools coming onto the School Breakfast Program as a result of the new mandate are given priority in start-up and expansion funding.

Please join me to access additional federal funds to mitigate hunger, improve academic performance and improve health status, including obesity prevention, among our children.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Penny Honda at 319-2014.

Yes, please add me as a co-author of Assembly Member Hancock's AB 2200.

Member's Name

Member's Signature

Please return to:
Assemblymember Loni Hancock, Room 4139
Attn: Penny Honda