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May 27, 2014

Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Re: *FY2015 Appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies*

Dear Representative:

The National School Boards Association (NSBA), representing more than 90,000 local school board members across the nation, working with and through our state school boards associations, writes to express support for local school district flexibility and modest regulatory relief for school meal programs in the FY 2015 Appropriations for the Department of Agriculture.

Students need healthy meals and adequate nutrition to achieve their potential in the classroom, and school board members are committed to ensuring all students are prepared to learn. However, school boards cannot ignore the higher costs and operational issues created by mandates in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (PL 111-296). Therefore, NSBA supports two important measures in the legislation that the Committee will consider on May 29, 2014:

- NSBA supports the appropriation of \$25 million for school meal equipment grants, which will help schools prepare and serve healthier meals, and improve food safety.
- NSBA also supports a provision requiring the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a process by which a State shall grant a temporary waiver from compliance with national nutrition standards.

The waiver provision offers relief to school districts from some of the federal mandates that have led to soaring operational costs along with other unintended consequences, such as plate waste and reduced participation.

NSBA looks forward to working with Congress and the Secretary to assure that school districts can successfully comply with the law and also serve the very best meals and provide excellent nutrition to children. Questions regarding our comments may be directed to Lucy Gettman, director, federal programs at 703-838-6763, or via email at [lgettman@nsba.org](mailto:lgettman@nsba.org).

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Gentzel  
Executive Director, NSBA

### **Our Mission**

Working with and  
Through our State  
Associations, NSBA  
Advocates for Equity  
and Excellence in  
Public Education  
through School Board  
Leadership

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