**H.R. Bill 5003**

Date:

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_;

Please oppose H.R. Bill 5003. I am opposed to this as it weakens a school lunch process that has been able to provide meals to vulnerable children by simplifying administrative procedures in low income towns and cities. This bill restricts the community eligibility option for low income schools. In CT this affects 193 schools and 95,000 students.

 Currently the cut off of ’50% of the children in a town receiving SNAP’ qualifies them as low income town. If 40% was used as the cut off, this would improve access to food programs. This is especially important in rural areas where there is significant hunger but it is hard to make the 50% cut off because of a lower population.

One in five families in Ct live in poverty which results in food insecurity. Children spend most of their day in school so it makes perfect sense that we provide easily accessible, healthy meals while they are there. We have made great strides in improving the nutrition of these meals and HR. bill 5003, returns us to the high sodium, low fiber, high sugar options of the past. It is time to make decisions on evidenced based recommendations that will provide the best health for our children now and in the future. An exception proposed in this bill is that fund raising by promoting soda, candy, cookies and cupcakes is should be allowed. In a society where one out of 3 children is obese, this encourages unhealthy eating. We need to stand up for the youngest members of our society and improve the health environment where they live.

This bill also does not expand WIC which is the one program that has proven to successfully meet the nutrition needs of pregnant women and infants. This program has resulted in less low birth weight babies and less infant mortality. Pregnancy defines the physiologic capabilities of a human for life and it is important that we address our attention to the most vulnerable.

For all of the above, it is important that you oppose bill. H.R. 5003. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Name/Town