



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. Box 7882 • Madison, WI 53707-7882

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Senator Rachael Cabral-Guevara – (608) 266-7745  
Representative Clint Moses - (608) 237-9192

## New Legislation Proposed to Target Ultra-Processed Food in School Lunches

**Madison, WI**—Representative Clint Moses (R-Menomonie) and Senator Rachael Cabral-Guevara (R-Fox Crossing) introduced legislation to increase the health of our students by prohibiting schools from serving ultra-processed foods in school lunches.

“With 15% of Wisconsin students ages two to 17 being obese, we need to support our children by supplying them with nutritious lunch options instead of foods that are known to contain carcinogens,” said Representative Moses. “Our kids need to be encouraged to eat healthier, and this starts at home and what is served to them at school.”

Currently, the U.S. Department of Agriculture establishes nutrition standards for the school lunch program. However, many chemical ingredients banned in other developed nations are still permitted in our school lunches, despite scientific evidence linking these substances to be harmful to children's health. The legislation proposed defines an “ultra-processed food” as a food or beverage that contains brominated vegetable oil, potassium bromate, propylparaben, azodicarbonamide, red dye 3, or titanium dioxide, and would prohibit it from being served as part of a free or reduced-priced meal for breakfast or lunch in schools.

“Consumption of ultra-processed foods has only increased, encompassing nearly 70% of what our kids eat,” said Senator Cabral-Guevara. “This has been followed by the doubling of the prevalence of Type 2 diabetes in children and other compounding health complications. As a mom and nurse, I want to make sure that if the government is funding a meal for our kids, it is healthy and safe for consumption.”

This legislation gives school districts broad flexibility to work with current food vendors to meet the healthy requirements to provide meals to students. Representative Moses and Senator Cabral-Guevara are currently in the process of gaining co-authors for the legislation and look forward to seeing the bill pass through the legislature and getting to the governor’s desk to be signed.

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