

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 5, 2026

The Honorable Brooke Rollins  
Secretary  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Secretary Rollins:

We write to urge your swift implementation of the *Protecting Children with Food Allergies Act*, which we authored and added as part of the *Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act of 2025*, which President Trump signed into law on January 14, 2026.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) requires school food personnel under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) to undergo annual trainings, which includes courses in nutrition, health, and food safety standards. For many years, USDA also has made trainings available to educate school food personnel to recognize and prevent food allergies in students, but these trainings are optional, rather than required. The provisions included in our bill, the *Protecting Children with Food Allergies Act*, now make these food allergy training courses a requirement for all food personnel in schools participating in the NSLP and SBP.

Every child should have the opportunity to learn in a safe environment, and every parent should feel secure in knowing that their children are safe while they are at school. Yet, due to the presence of common food allergens—such as milk, eggs, and peanuts—we have seen too many tragic instances of students suffering fatal allergic reactions at school. In the past two decades, the rate of children with food allergies has more than doubled. In 1999, 3 percent of children had food allergies. Today, 8 percent of children, about two students per classroom, have food allergies.

Since USDA already partners with the Institute on Child Nutrition in developing optional training courses and materials to recognize and prevent food allergies, we urge USDA to move forward with implementing these mandatory food allergy training requirements without delay. We also request a staff briefing by USDA to provide our offices with an update on implementation of the *Protecting Children with Food Allergies Act* by May 1, 2026.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to working with you in creating a safer learning environment for all students.

Sincerely,



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Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



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Deb Fischer  
United States Senator