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(Original Signature of Member)

115TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**H. R.** \_\_\_\_\_

To amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to prohibit the stigmatization of children who are unable to pay for meals.

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**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**A BILL**

To amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to prohibit the stigmatization of children who are unable to pay for meals.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Anti-Lunch Shaming  
5 Act of 2017”.

1 **SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON STIGMATIZATION OF CHILDREN**  
2 **WHO ARE UNABLE TO PAY FOR MEALS.**

3 Section 9(b)(10) of the Richard B. Russell National  
4 School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1758(b)(10)) is amended—

5 (1) by striking “(10) No physical” and insert-  
6 ing the following:

7 “(10) DISCRIMINATORY OR STIGMATIZING  
8 TREATMENT OF CHILDREN BY SCHOOLS.—

9 “(A) DISCRIMINATION BASED ON ELIGI-  
10 BILITY.—No physical”; and

11 (2) by adding at the end the following:

12 “(B) STIGMATIZATION BASED ON LACK OF  
13 FUNDS OR DEBT.—

14 “(i) DEFINITION OF COVERED  
15 CHILD.—In this subparagraph, the term  
16 ‘covered child’ means a child who—

17 “(I) is a student at a school that  
18 participates in—

19 “(aa) the school lunch pro-  
20 gram established under this Act;  
21 or

22 “(bb) the school breakfast  
23 program established by section 4  
24 of the Child Nutrition Act of  
25 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1773); and

1                   “(II)(aa) does not have funds to  
2 pay for a lunch or breakfast at the  
3 school; or

4                   “(bb) has outstanding credit that  
5 was extended by a school food author-  
6 ity for a lunch or breakfast at the  
7 school.

8                   “(ii) REQUIREMENTS OF SCHOOL  
9 FOOD AUTHORITIES.—

10                   “(I) IN GENERAL.—A school food  
11 authority shall not permit—

12                   “(aa) the public identifica-  
13 tion or stigmatization of a cov-  
14 ered child, such as by requiring  
15 the covered child to wear a wrist-  
16 band or display a hand stamp to  
17 identify the covered child as a  
18 covered child; or

19                   “(bb) any requirement that  
20 a covered child, because of the  
21 status of the covered child as a  
22 covered child—

23                   “(AA) perform chores  
24 or any other activity that is

1 not required of students  
2 generally; or

3 “(BB) dispose of a  
4 lunch or breakfast after it  
5 has been served to the cov-  
6 ered child.

7 “(II) COMMUNICATIONS.—

8 “(aa) IN GENERAL.—Sub-  
9 ject to item (bb), a school food  
10 authority shall require that any  
11 communication relating to an  
12 outstanding credit described in  
13 clause (i)(II)(bb) of a covered  
14 child shall be directed—

15 “(AA) to a parent or  
16 guardian of the covered  
17 child; and

18 “(BB) not to the cov-  
19 ered child.

20 “(bb) LETTERS.—A school  
21 food authority may permit a re-  
22 quirement that a covered child  
23 deliver a letter addressed to a  
24 parent or guardian of the covered  
25 child that contains a communica-

1                   tion described in item (aa), sub-  
2                   ject to the condition that the let-  
3                   ter shall not be distributed to the  
4                   covered child in a manner that  
5                   stigmatizes the covered child.”.

6 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7           It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Agri-  
8 culture should ensure that—

9                   (1)(A) to the maximum extent practicable, an  
10                  application for a free or reduced price lunch under  
11                  the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act  
12                  (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) is distributed—

13                         (i) in an understandable and uniform for-  
14                         mat; and

15                         (ii) by not later than July 1 each year; and

16                   (B) a school food authority offers technical as-  
17                  sistance to a parent or legal guardian to complete an  
18                  application described in subparagraph (A);

19                   (2) each school food authority coordinates  
20                  with—

21                         (A) the local educational agency liaison  
22                         designated under section 722(g)(1)(J)(ii) of the  
23                         McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42  
24                         U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii)) to ensure that home-  
25                         less children and youths eligible to receive free

1 lunches and breakfasts under section  
2 9(b)(12)(A)(iv) of the Richard B. Russell Na-  
3 tional School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C.  
4 1758(b)(12)(A)(iv)) receive those free lunches  
5 and breakfasts; and

6 (B) the State agency responsible for ad-  
7 ministering the State plans under parts B and  
8 E of title IV of the Social Security Act (42  
9 U.S.C. 621 et seq.; 42 U.S.C. 470 et seq.) to  
10 ensure that foster children eligible to receive  
11 free lunches and breakfasts under section  
12 9(b)(12)(A)(vii) of the Richard B. Russell Na-  
13 tional School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C.  
14 1758(b)(12)(A)(vii)) receive those free lunches  
15 and breakfasts; and

16 (3) a school food authority that participates in  
17 the school lunch program or the school breakfast  
18 program under the Richard B. Russell National  
19 School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) or sec-  
20 tion 4 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C.  
21 1773), respectively—

22 (A) shall provide to a child who requests a  
23 lunch or breakfast a lunch or breakfast, regard-  
24 less of whether the child—

1 (i) has money to pay for the lunch or  
2 breakfast; or

3 (ii) owes money for a lunch or break-  
4 fast;

5 (B) shall not provide to a child who quali-  
6 fies for a free or reduced price lunch or break-  
7 fast an alternate meal that is not provided to  
8 students generally; and

9 (C) should explore innovative ways to use  
10 technology to improve and coordinate commu-  
11 nications with parents and guardians with re-  
12 spect to functions such as—

13 (i) prepayment for meals;

14 (ii) checking balances for school  
15 meals;

16 (iii) adding funds to accounts for  
17 school meals;

18 (iv) addressing outstanding debt for  
19 school meals; and

20 (v) sending automatic emails when an  
21 account balance is low.