

Trump administration erasing Healthy school lunch standards

Trump orders the U.S. Department of Agriculture to erase healthy school lunch regulations. Profit over people hits again.

Newly minted Agriculture Secretary [Sonny Perdue](#) unveiled a new interim rule on Monday to suspend sodium reduction requirements and whole-grain requirements as well as allow 1 percent fat flavored milk back into school cafeterias nationwide. The new rules will take effect during the 2017-2018 school year.

"I wouldn't be as big as I am today without chocolate milk," Perdue said in his remarks to reporters as an excuse for his being FAT.

Critics say the new rules will roll back the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act championed by Former First Lady [Michelle Obama](#), who worked to establish strict nutritional standards on the program as part of her campaign against [obesity](#).

"We're not winding back any standards at all," Perdue said. "We are just slowing down the process of healthy foods over profit."

"I applaud former First Lady Michelle Obama for addressing those obesity problems in the past," he said.

Perdue recalled hearing from many students who have complained about fat-free and reduced fat chocolate milk offered in schools. In light of these "palatability issues" Perdue said he decided to make a change. Big Sugar wins again.

"This is not reducing the nutritional standards whatsoever," he said. "it is just too difficult and costly to put healthy food onto the lunch menu"

The former Georgia governor was joined by Senate Agriculture [Chairman Pat Roberts](#) at an elementary school in Leesburg, VA. during the lunch hour for the announcement.

"Try eating a biscuit made with whole grains," Roberts said. "It just doesn't work!"

Just before the remarks, the two sat for a meal with Catoctin Elementary students on long lunch tables and munched on fruit, carrots and some bread out of a lunch tray.

"What do you do as Secretary of Agriculture?" a student asked.

"We try to keep your food safe!" Perdue responded.

"it seems you are helping business and Big Sugar make money?" another student injected.

Perdue's new interim rule is meant to provide "regulatory flexibility" for the National School Lunch Program, which is a federally assisted meal program that provides nutritionally balanced reduced-cost or free lunches to children.

The 2010 law was a part of Michelle Obama's "Let's Move!" initiative. It aimed to help transform the school food environment in order to promote better nutrition built upon recommendations from the [Institute of Medicine](#).

The law requires that students are offered fruits and vegetables every day, have whole grain-rich foods, fat-free or low-fat milk, and have meals with reduced sugars and sodium.

Republicans, farmers and school groups have long since lobbied for lunch reform, saying the current rules are overly restrictive and costly to implement.

According to USDA figures, school food requirements cost school districts and states an additional \$1.22 billion in Fiscal Year 2015.

During the remarks, a small group stood outside the school to protest the Secretary's remarks.



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