



PARENTS DEFENDING EDUCATION

ACTION

Chairman John Boozman
Ranking Member Amy Klobuchar
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

January 7, 2025

Dear Chairman Boozman and Ranking Member Klobuchar,

As the executive director of PDE Action – a nonprofit social welfare organization created to advocate for parental rights at the local, state, and federal level – I wish to convey our organization’s support for Brooke Rollins as the United States Secretary of Agriculture under incoming President Donald J. Trump.

Over the past four years, parents around the country were appalled when the Biden administration tried to leverage the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)’s National School Lunch Program¹ to push a political agenda on children - holding billions of dollars’ worth of school lunch funding as ransom in a clear-cut attempt to coerce school districts to adopt their anti-female Title IX policies.² This ill-conceived power grab was both a direct affront to local control of schools and a clear violation of parental rights, and the fact that it passed departmental muster demonstrates a clear failure of leadership at the Department. Under no circumstances should the federal government bully states and local school districts into adopting the ideological and partisan beliefs of a small cohort of activists – particularly when those policies are clearly in opposition to the preferences of the vast majority of American parents.³

¹ National School Lunch Program. U.S. Department of Agriculture: Economic Research Service. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/child-nutrition-programs/national-school-lunch-program/>

² “No Free Lunch: Biden Admin Will Pull Meal Funding for Schools That Don’t Comply With Its LGBT Agenda.” Washington Free Beacon. June 1, 2022. <https://freebeacon.com/biden-administration/no-free-lunch-biden-admin-will-pull-meal-funding-for-schools-that-dont-comply-with-its-lgbt-agenda/>

³ Poll: Parents Support Girls-Only Spaces in Schools, Oppose Parental Exclusion Policies and Grading for Equity, Parents Defending Education. January 6, 2025. <https://defendinged.org/press-releases/parents-defending->

The USDA desperately needs a strong leader with a proven track record of opposing government overreach, and we believe that Brooke Rollins is exactly the kind of visionary leader that this role demands. Ms. Rollins possesses the wisdom, experience, and humility needed to reorient the USDA's focus back to President Abraham Lincoln's original vision of "the People's Department," balancing the needs of American's agricultural sector while faithfully executing this important nutrition program for students in a way that will not infringe on parental rights.

Ms. Rollins' extensive resume speaks for itself; she possesses decades of experience in public policy both at the state and federal level, having served in the previous Trump administration as the Director of the Domestic Policy Council and as the Assistant to the President for Strategic Initiatives. Thanks to her tenure as policy director for former Texas governor Rick Perry, she possesses a unique understanding of how states and the federal government can work together to achieve mutually beneficial policy objectives. As the head of both the Texas Public Policy Foundation and the America First Policy Institute, she has been the tip of the spear developing and advancing important policy solutions aligned with President Trump's vision for the country. She has critical agriculture credentials, having graduated with honors from Texas A&M with a degree in agricultural development – and perhaps most importantly, she is a proud mother of four children who personally understands how federal policies can and do impact American families.

At Parents Defending Education Action, we are proud to endorse Brooke Rollins as the next Secretary of the USDA and urge your committee to move quickly to officially confirm her position. As a fellow nonprofit leader who has worked alongside Brooke for the past eighteen years, I have the utmost confidence in her ability to effectively lead the USDA and faithfully execute President Trump's agenda.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicole Neily". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Nicole Neily
Executive Director
Parents Defending Education Action