

Education & the Workforce Committee Member Day

Rep. Brad Finstad (MN-01)

Friday, December 1, 2023

Thank you, Chairwoman Foxx, and Ranking Member Scott, for the opportunity to present an important issue to the Education & the Workforce Committee.

I am proud to represent Minnesota's First Congressional District, and advocate on issues that are top of mind for southern Minnesotans. As you both know, the largest COVID-19 fraud in the nation, Feeding Our Future, took place in Minnesota.

Feeding Our Future exploited USDA child nutrition programs to steal \$250 million in taxpayer dollars meant to feed hungry children. Indictments later revealed that fraudsters purchased luxury homes, vacations, cars, and even private jets on the taxpayer's dime. To date, 60 individuals have been charged by the U.S. Department of Justice in connection with this fraud scheme.

I have been proud to work with Chairwoman Foxx, Chairman Comer, Chairman Thompson, and the rest of the Minnesota Republican Delegation in conducting oversight of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Minnesota Department of Education in their oversight of improper payments to Feeding Our Future, and I look forward to continuing this work until all responsible parties are held accountable and we get to the bottom of how these agencies allowed this fraud to happen.

Unfortunately, USDA and the Minnesota Department of Education have not fully complied with this Committee's oversight efforts. It is time to take further action to ensure accountability and identify the bureaucratic failures that led to this massive fraud scheme.

I urge you to consider H.R. 4786, the Feeding Children Not Fraudsters Act, which would audit any cases of COVID-related fraud committed

through USDA's child nutrition programs, to provide Congress the information necessary to fix any bureaucratic failures and hold those responsible accountable.

I look forward to working with Members on both sides of the aisle to advance this legislation and I hope the Committee will strongly consider this important step to conduct proper oversight of this massive fraud scheme. Thank you again for convening this hearing and for the opportunity to convey my priorities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brad Finstad". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B" and a long, sweeping underline.

Brad Finstad

Member of Congress