



Nutrition bill 'less than useful,' says analyst



Bill Bumpas - OneNewsNow - 12/13/2010 4:10:00 AM



As President Obama prepares to sign Congress' recently approved child nutrition bill, there's growing concern the measure is an example of government overreach and is too expensive.

The \$4.5 billion bill that allows more children to eat lunches and dinners at school is part of First Lady Michelle Obama's campaign to end child hunger and fight childhood obesity. The measure is an attempt to cut down on greasy foods and extra calories by giving the government power to decide what kinds of foods may be sold in vending machines and lunch lines, and it could even limit frequent school bake sales and fundraisers that give kids extra chances to eat brownies and pizza. ([More details](#))

Neal McCluskey, associate director of the Cato Institute's [Center for Educational Freedom](#), is not optimistic about the program's success.



"It makes great sense politically, but as policy, it is likely to be less than useful," he suggests.

He tells OneNewsNow the program is well-intentioned, but its positive impact on child nutrition will likely be minuscule because this type of plan rarely overcomes any nutritional deficits or the bad eating habits of kids outside of school.

"This is the kind of thing that everybody thinks, 'Oh, look at all the good that the federal government is doing' -- without really seeing whether it's at all effective or really focusing on the costs," McCluskey explains. "It's going to cost the federal government more money at a time when we don't have any money to spend."

He views the legislation as an example of the federal government pushing its way a little deeper into the public school system.



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