

Ending Hunger in PA

Check List

When you add up the cost of poor health, struggles with education, and other factors, the impact of hunger on our communities is enormous. Public policy that facilitates access to nutritious food for children and adults lowers the negative effects of hunger resulting in healthy communities and savings to the taxpayers.

Department of Agriculture

 **ASK \$23,000,000**


State Food Purchase Program [SFPP] - Demand for food assistance remains above pre-pandemic levels, and new challenges continue to put a strain on food banks' operations. Higher fuel prices and inflationary costs are cutting into the limited resources food banks must operate. The rising cost of food is a significant hardship not only for families, but services like this that want to ensure everyone who needs a meal can get one.

 **ASK \$7,500,000**

Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System [PASS] - PASS provides an efficient mechanism for Pennsylvania's agricultural industry to donate safe, wholesome food products while being reimbursed for the costs involved in harvesting, processing, packaging, and transporting these foods. Without PASS, these food products would otherwise be left to rot in the field, be plowed under, be dumped, or be landfilled.

 **ASK \$1,000,000**

Senior Food Box Program [SFBB] - Thousands of seniors in Pennsylvania struggle with choosing between medications, food, and other life-sustaining cost. Obtaining state funding to support the Senior Food Box Program to assist lead agencies with costs incurred in recruiting and providing home delivery service to more seniors in PA would make incredible impact.

 **ASK \$15,000,000**

Establish a Local Food Purchasing Incentive (LFPI) program in PA to provide schools additional funds to partially or completely offset the cost of purchasing local foods and remove a barrier to serving local foods in K-12 school lunches. An LFPI in PA will provide kids and families with access to high-quality, nutritious foods, improve public health outcomes by prioritizing sustainable agriculture and grow economic opportunities for PA family farms.

Department of Community & Economic Development

 **ASK \$2,500,000**

Fresh Food Financing Initiative (FFFI) - Currently funded through DCED, the PA Fresh Food Financing Initiative provides one-time grants and loans for the development or expansion of healthy food retail such as grocery stores, farmers markets, and co-ops in LMI and under-resourced urban and rural areas across the state. The presence of these food retail outlets improves access to healthy food and supports venues for important affordability benefits such as SNAP and WIC. FFFI also creates and retains jobs while boosting local economies and stimulating additional investment.

Department of Education

 **ASK \$290,000,000**

School Meals for ALL. Excessive costs are hurting families, with many struggling to afford the food their kids need. Schools want to provide kids nutritious school meals but face higher food and overhead costs; labor shortages; supply chain issues; and a dramatic increase in school meal debt. Schools work hard to support their communities and should not be forced into the inappropriate role of being bill collectors. With thousands of PA children being food insecure despite their families being over the income limit for school meals and temporary increases to meal reimbursements ending soon (June 30), PA must:

- Increase the state supplement for school meals to address rising cost of food, labor, and transportation and improve meal quality.
- Provide access to free school meals for all students to support health and learning and address school meal debt.

✓ Department of Health

- Improving WIC technology to remove barriers to access and meet families where they are developing an online Smart Card to redeem WIC benefits and permanently implementing telehealth policies.
- Integrating and improving cross-system communications to simplify the application and recertification process for families.
- Strengthening and diversifying the WIC workforce, including support for cultural competency and equity professional development opportunities for WIC staff and vendors.

✓ Department of Human Services

ASK \$17,000,000

Increase the minimum SNAP benefit for seniors and people with disabilities. An increase to the minimum benefit would increase food security and good nutrition for older adults. The federal minimum benefit is currently \$23 per month, we suggest raising that to \$35 per month.

ASK \$3,750,000

The permanent SUN Bucks [Summer EBT] program rolls out summer of 2024. The benefits and half of administration costs are provided by the federal government, but the state will need to provide the other half of the administration dollars. For there to be a well-implemented plan that supports schools and families, there needs to be an investment in systems and support staff for this program. SUN Bucks will draw down \$120M in federal food assistance for children.

ASK \$2,000,000

Supporting healthy eating by investing in nutrition incentives programs such as Food Bucks' SNAP benefits average about \$2 per person per meal, and Food Bucks allow SNAP recipients to earn Food Bucks – stretching those dollars – when they purchase fruits and vegetables. We support an investment to better meet the demand by PA families and boost revenue for many farmers and small businesses, while also drawing down additional federal dollars from the GusNIP program.



Pennsylvania Hunger Action Coalition Membership

Allies for Children*Benefits Data Trust*Brandywine Health Foundation*Bucks County Opportunity Council*Bucks County Women Advocacy Coalition*-Cambria County Backpack Program*Ceisler Media & Issue Advocacy*Center for Hunger-Free Communities*Center for Population Health*Central PA Food Bank*Chester County Community Foundation*Children Hunger Outreach Partners*Coalition for Low Income Pennsylvanians*Community Action Agency of Delaware County*Community Action Association of PA*Community Legal Services*Community Partnership, Inc.*Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission*Family Health Council of Central PA*Family Health Council of Central PA*Fayette County Community Action Agency*Feeding Pennsylvania*Food for Families*Food Helpers*FRAC*-Franklin County*Gateway Health Plan*Great Valley School District*Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank*Health Care Decisions*Healthy Blair County Coalition*Helping Harvest*Hillman Family Foundation*Housing Alliance of PA*Hunger-Free PA*Hunters Sharing the Harvest*Indiana County Community Action Program*Jewish Family Services of Greater Harrisburg, Inc.*Jewish Healthcare Foundation*Just Harvest*Lebanon Valley College*Lehigh Valley Food Policy Council*Lutheran Advocacy Ministries in PA*Manna on Main Street*Mercer County Food Bank*Milk4U*MontCo Anti-Hunger Solutions*Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services*North Penn School District*PA Budget & Policy Center*PA Cancel Lunch Debt Coalition*PA Catholic Conference*PA Dept of Aging*PA Dept of Agriculture*PA Dept of Education*PA Dept of Health*PA Dept of Human Services*PA Food Merchants Association*PA Food Policy Council*PA Health Funders Collaborative*PA Jewish Council*PA Partnership*PA State Council of Farm Organizations*PA State Educators Association*Partnership for Better Health*Penn State University*People's Emergency Center*Philabundance*Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger*Philadelphia Department of Health*Philadelphia Office of Children & Families*Philadelphia School District*Phoenixville Area Community Services*Phoenixville Community Health Foundation*Pittsburgh Policy Council*Pottstown Foundation*School Nutrition Association of PA*Share Food Program*Share Our Strength*SHFB of Lehigh Valley & NE PA*SHFB of Northwest PA*Shippensburg University*The Food Trust*The Foundation for Delaware County*The Leo & Peggy Pierce Family Foundation*The Shippensburg Community Resource Coalition*Thomas Jefferson University*United Way of PA*University of PA College of Arts & Science*Weinberg NE PA Regional Food Bank*Westmoreland County Food Bank*York County Food Bank