



Increase Funds for Fruits & Vegetables for SNAP & WIC Families:

SNAP Match Program For 4 years, 68 health clinics, 90 farmers markets, and 233 grocery stores across Washington collaborated on an innovative USDA pilot grant that matches SNAP purchases with additional funds to buy fruits & vegetables. To sustain this program without interruption for 35,000 SNAP shoppers and patients, *\$1.3 million* is needed until the next round of federal grants is available. These funds allow low-income people to continue to purchase healthy food, fight hunger, and improve their health.

WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (HB 2262 / SB 6309) Over 140,000 low income moms and young children get food assistance from the WIC Program, yet WIC provides only \$11/month for a mom to buy fruits and vegetables. The federal Farmers Market Nutrition Program (WIC FMNP) provides \$20 per WIC participant and a maximum \$40 per family each summer to buy fresh, local produce at Washington farmers markets. Increasing the value to \$32 per season helps new moms and growing children to be healthier and develop healthy eating habits.

Increase Access to Free School Meals for Students and their Families:

Expand Participation in the Community Eligibility Provision by Eligible Schools (HB 2660) The federal Community Eligibility Provision allows certain high-need, high poverty schools to serve free meals to all students. Using CEP eliminates the need for co-pays by the state and eliminates all school meal debt for families and schools. Yet, WA ranks 45th in the country for eligible schools offering CEP. Eligible schools should offer CEP – with a public opt-out mechanism for certain schools; an incentive for certain schools if they do participate; and support for OSPI to give schools the resources needed to transition to CEP.

Eliminate the Co-pay for Reduced Price School Lunch (HB 1892) Kids do better in school when they don't have to worry whether they can afford meals. Some families struggle to pay for a child's reduced-price lunches: \$146/year for two children. Eliminate the co-pay for *all* low-income students so kids can focus on learning, instead of whether they'll be hungry at lunchtime.

Build the Infrastructure Capacity of Food Pantries & Food Banks

Provide grants to help emergency food organizations build capacity to respond to increasing needs for storage and distribution of perishable food. Trade policy and 2019's food waste reduction bill (HB 1114) will continue to increase pressure on the already-stressed capacity of small-, medium- and large-scale food banks and food pantries to accept, store, and distribute fresh and perishable food. Grants will help purchase or build refrigeration, freezers, and chill storage, and expand trucking/distribution capacity.

Expand WSDA's Farm to Food Pantry Program

Grow the funds for this WSDA program that operates in 18 counties and ties healthy, local food for food pantries with support for small-scale farmers. This innovative project provides small amounts of funds to food pantries to survey client preferences, identify nutrition gaps in their donated produce, and enable them to broker purchasing deals with local farmers to provide nutrient-dense produce to hungry people.

Formalize Washington's Food Policy Forum (HB 1731 / SB 6091)

Since 2016, budget provisos have supported Washington's Food Policy Forum, a cross-sector group of agriculture, hunger, business and conservation agencies and advocates, with bipartisan legislative leaders. Together, we identified key policies to strengthen our state's food system: how to fight hunger, preserve farmland, mitigate climate change, reduce barriers for small- and mid-scale agriculture, and build infrastructure to support our food system. It's time now to formalize the Food Policy Forum in statute.

For more information, contact:

Claire Lane, Director - Anti-Hunger & Nutrition Coalition | (206) 446 - 0966 | Claire.Lane2@gmail.com

Anti-Poverty Priorities

Reform TANF to Help Families with Children Living in Deep Poverty (HB 1603 / SB 6478)

Remove punitive TANF policies that penalize families living in deep poverty and make it harder for them to enroll in and succeed with TANF. Allowing families who play by the rules to qualify for hardship extensions to time limits; eliminating the full-family sanction so kids can continue to get support; and reorienting policies to encourage compliance means more families can use TANF and workforce services to get and stay on a path out of deep poverty.

Improve Protections for Renters to Improve Housing Stability (HB 1656/ SB 5733) and (HB 1694)

Food insecurity and housing insecurity are tightly linked, so creating protections for low income renters is critical to fighting hunger. Prevent homelessness by requiring landlords to have a legitimate business reason to end a tenancy - also known as "just cause" for eviction (HB 1656) - and allowing tenants to pay move-in costs over 3 months (HB 1694).

Increase Funding for the Housing and Essential Need (HEN) Program

HEN provides critical rental, utility, and transportation assistance to people with significant physical and mental disabilities who are unable to work and often struggle with hunger - yet there are wait lists for this critical lifeline. Increase HEN funding for targeted counties most impacted by demand and eliminate their wait lists.

Adapt the GRADS Program to Help Teen Parents Complete High School (HB 2455 / SB 6255)

Parents with babies and young adults are groups at high risk for hunger. The GRADs program helps teen parents finish high school or a diploma while helping them be great parents. Increasing access to child care, offering transportation to school, and providing resources to schools will allow more young parents to complete high school and stay on a path to improve their child's outcomes and reduce poverty.

Our Ongoing Commitment

Create A State Tax System that Supports a Healthy, Prosperous and Hunger-free Washington

Our Coalition continues to support reforms to our state's upside-down tax system. Closing outdated tax loopholes, increasing transparency in tax breaks, funding the Working Families Tax Credit, and finding new and sustainable sources of revenue are *all* strategies needed to respond to our growing population and to invest in the foundations - food, housing, schools, and health care - that benefit *all* Washingtonians.

Protect Investments in Nutrition, Health and Economic Stability for People in Need

Our state has created innovative programs and proactive policies that help fight hunger and poverty in our communities. Our Coalition is committed to protect and strengthen basic needs, hunger, and anti-poverty programs for low-income people so these programs continue to fight hunger and build stable pathways out of poverty.