



Advocate to End Hunger

WCFB believes that food is a fundamental right of all people and that hunger is an issue of social justice. Through advocacy, we engage our partners, communities, and elected officials in creating long term solutions to address the root causes of hunger.

We believe to end hunger we need to support policy changes that:

1. Raise Wages & Increase Economic Opportunity
2. Support a Healthy & Equitable Food System
3. Support and Protect State and Federal Funding for Food Assistance Programs

Your Voice Matters!

Did you know it only takes three phone calls to an elected official for them to take notice of an issue?

Did you know that a personalized email or letter from a constituent really makes a difference to a policy maker?

Did you know that just a handful of comments on social media can get a legislators attention?

Become an Advocate!

Here's How:

1. **Sign up** to receive action alerts at www.foodbank.org/learn-more/advocacy.
2. **Contact your local, state and federal elected officials** to ask them to support programs and policies like the ones mentioned on the reverse that support people in being hunger-free and healthy. Not sure who your elected officials are? Visit www.wheredoivotema.com.
3. **Connect with us** and your elected officials on social media – we're on Twitter and Facebook, and so aren't many elected officials!
4. **Share Your Story.** Have you or someone you love experienced the hardship of not having enough food in your home? Your experience can help our elected officials understand. Consider sharing your story at www.foodbank.org/learn-more/advocacy.

Our Advocacy Partners

Local

Worcester Food Policy Council
Worcester Community Labor Coalition
Community Legal Aid/Central West Justice

Statewide

Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Massachusetts Public Health Association
Project Bread
Massachusetts Food Systems Collaborative
Food Bank Coalition of MA

Regional

Food Solutions New England

National

Feeding America
Food Research and Action Center
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
Share Our Strength





2018 MA Policy Agenda

To end hunger we must:

1. Raise Wages & Increase Economic Opportunity
2. Support a Healthy & Equitable Food System
3. Support and Protect State and Federal Funding for Food Assistance Programs

121,000 people in Worcester County would be directly affected by an increase in the minimum wage

Over 600,000 Massachusetts residents qualify for SNAP but are not enrolled

WCFB annually distributes enough food for 4.8 million meals to 82,000 people in need, 27,500 of whom are children

Secure Funding for the Healthy Incentive Program (Budget) - The Healthy Incentive Program was launched by DTA and MDAR in April 2017 with a federal grant. The program incentivizes SNAP customers to purchase fruits and vegetables at Massachusetts farmers markets, farm stands, and through CSA programs. The program was so successful that that it utilized all the federal funding allocated for three years, in less than one year. This program is economic development, health, and anti-hunger all in one. At least \$6.2M in funding is needed for the program to continue in FY19.

\$15 Minimum Wage for All Workers (Donahue H.2365/Donnelly S.1004) - Increasing the minimum wage to \$15 by 2021 would raise the wages of roughly 947,000 workers, or 29 percent of the state's workforce. Workers who are paid low wages include highly skilled professions, like nursing assistants, childcare providers, and paramedics. In addition, 20% of all the people in Worcester County that visit a food pantry or meal program are working, but are still not able to make ends meet.

Breakfast After the Bell (Vega H.327/DiDomenico S.2441)

All schools where 60% or more of the students qualify for free and reduced meals will serve breakfast after the bell, thereby ensuring that all students start the day free from hunger. Breakfast After the Bell programs increase breakfast participation, increase school feeding program bottom lines, reduce nurse visits, and increase academic performance.

Close the "SNAP Gap"! (Livingstone H.101/DiDomenico S.612) – Create a common application for Mass Health and SNAP benefits (as well as other DTA administered benefits), thus improving efficiency and increasing food security for over 570,000 people who are on MassHealth and qualify for SNAP.

Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program (MEFAP). - MEFAP provides a consistent supply of quality, nutrient-rich foods and locally grown fresh produce to residents of the Commonwealth through the four Massachusetts Food Banks and their collective network of 845 food pantries, community meal programs, and shelters.

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