



Food Lifeline

Pandemic Hunger Response and 2021 State Advocacy Agenda

Hunger, Poverty, and Equity Priorities for COVID-19 Response and Recovery



Food Lifeline is the Feeding America affiliate in western Washington and a founding member of Feeding Washington.

We partner with many, including:

- Anti-Hunger & Nutrition Coalition
- Balance Our Tax Code Coalition
- Children's Alliance
- Feeding Washington
- Food Policy Forum
- Governor's Food Security Coordination Team
- Low-Income Housing Alliance
- Northwest Harvest
- Racial Equity Team
- Second Harvest
- Statewide Poverty Action Network
- Washington Anti-Poverty Advocates Workgroup
- Washington State Senior Citizens Lobby
- Washington Food Coalition
- Working Families Tax Credit Coalition

Food Systems

State Food System Resiliency—ACTIVELY SUPPORT WSDA's full budget request for state food system infrastructure and market access grants for farms, food processors and food distributors. \$15M

Food Bank Redistributor Investments—ACTIVELY SUPPORT measures to direct investment to regional hunger-relief organizations serving as redistribution hubs, to be used for facility, equipment, technology, and staff capacity improvements.

Farm to Food Pantry—SUPPORT budget request to expand this WSDA program that encourages produce donation and purchasing between local food pantries and small-scale farmers. \$700K

Washington Food Policy Forum—SUPPORT budget request to continue this public-private partnership created to promote Washington food system goals. \$600K

Hunger and Health

SNAP Fruit & Vegetable Nutrition Incentive—ACTIVELY SUPPORT DOH's \$3 budget request for programs that help SNAP participants afford more fruits and vegetables. \$3M

Washington Produce Donation—ACTIVELY SUPPORT measures to help fund large-scale procurement of donated Washington produce for hunger relief efforts statewide.

Hunger Prevention

Emergency Food Assistance Program—ACTIVELY SUPPORT WSDA's EFAP budget request for food & operational expenses at local food pantries and food bank distribution centers. \$23M

Food Assistance to SNAP Households—SUPPORT a one-time cash benefit and 5-month temporary food assistance program to help people who are transitioning off of SNAP or FAP enrollment. \$989K

Food Assistance Program—SUPPORT funding to provide the maximum food benefit level for people (legal immigrants) who qualify for FAP. FY21 \$6.7M

Food & Cash Assistance Benefit Reviews—SUPPORT pausing safety net benefit reviews until June 2021 for Basic Food, TANF, State Family Assistance, and Aged, Blind or Disabled programs. \$2.9M

School Meals—SUPPORT measures to improve access and availability of school nutrition programs, like Farm to School grant funding for local produce purchasing.

Poverty

Working Families Tax Credit/Recovery Rebate—ACTIVELY SUPPORT a direct cash assistance tax credit of at least \$500 for lower income workers disproportionately harmed by the pandemic.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families—SUPPORT measures to improve critical TANF resources and support offered to families with children living in deep poverty.

State Housing Trust Fund & Rental Assistance—SUPPORT measures to increase & preserve affordable housing and assistance for renters at risk of eviction.

Equity & Social Justice

Racial Equity—MONITOR for SUPPORT, policies aimed at dismantling institutional racism and inequitable and unjust systems that create and perpetuate determinants of hunger.

Washington State Office of Equity—SUPPORT fully funding the efforts of the state office of equity.

Digital Equity—SUPPORT measures to promote equity in digital broadband access to help more people connect to important safety net services, or educational and work opportunities.

Tax, Budget, and Nonprofits

Capital Gains Tax—SUPPORT measures to rebalance Washington's regressive tax code while providing more revenue for community investments.

MONITOR any legislation impacting the regulatory or tax environment for nonprofits.

Public Policy Platform



Food Lifeline’s Public Policy Platform is intended to support the organization’s mission work, and specifically, advocacy aimed at root causes of hunger and strengthening the public safety net so that people with low-income can feed themselves and their families.

As such, the policy platform addresses federal, state, and municipal hunger-related policies and funding. It prioritizes recommendations where hunger prevention intersects with issues of health, poverty, equity, social justice, food systems, and related government revenue or budget infrastructure.

It will inform policy discussions, provide broad guidance for developing positions on emerging issues, and help frame outreach for building collaboration around issue advocacy. It is the framework from which Food Lifeline’s annual legislative agenda is derived. Accordingly, the platform will be revised from time to time as changes are required.

<p>Hunger Prevention</p> <p>Government nutrition assistance is the first line of defense against hunger, yet current funding levels are not enough to tackle food insecurity alone or keep up with changing needs.</p> <p>Food Lifeline will prioritize measures to protect and increase funding levels, improve access to, and increase program participation for federal and state nutrition assistance programs, like SNAP, TEFAP, EFAP, Basic Food, CSFP, FINI, F2FP, WIC, School Meals, and Summer EBT.</p>	<p>Food Systems</p> <p>Consistent access to donated nutritious food depends on a statewide food system that produces in abundance, is sustainable, and encourages food rescue. These aims require an effective policy environment for agriculture, food manufacturing, food businesses, and the like, as well as just and equitable practices for workforces supporting them.</p> <p>Food Lifeline will consider policy measures that improve food systems, incentivize the conditions for food rescue, and build operational capacity for nonprofit, charitable hunger relief.</p>	<p>Hunger and Health</p> <p>Food insecurity negatively impacts health. A counter to this is steady access to nutritious food, which can improve health resulting in lowering the cost of care for low-income people.</p> <p>Food Lifeline will consider measures that positively impact the health of people experiencing hunger by providing nutritious food, promoting nutrition education and healthy eating, including increased utilization of nutrition assistance programs and addressing food insecurity in health care settings.</p>
<p>Poverty</p> <p>Hunger is caused by scarcity and lack – inadequate financial resources, unaffordable or inaccessible healthcare, and lack of stable and affordable housing, under-employment and scarcity of living wage jobs.</p> <p>Food Lifeline will consider policy measures that have a nexus between poverty and hunger, especially around household stability, affordable housing, living wage jobs, and related basic needs.</p>	<p>Equity & Social Justice</p> <p>Hunger is also caused by systemic and social injustice. This and other social determinants of hunger provide opportunities to advance policies that challenge the inequitable and unjust systems that create and perpetuate poverty.</p> <p>Food Lifeline will consider policy measures that address equity & social justice for vulnerable and low-income children, adults and seniors, with emphasis on low-income families of color, immigrant, and under-resourced communities.</p>	<p>Tax, Budget, and Nonprofits</p> <p>Support for nonprofit organizations is conditioned by structures in tax code, regulations, statutes, and municipal ordinances and codes. Tax policy plays a key role in the level of resources available to fight against hunger and can incentive food rescue.</p> <p>Food Lifeline will consider measures that impact the regulatory and tax environment for charitable hunger relief organizations, operationally and through the donation of food and funds to food banks and other nonprofit organizations.</p>

1/14/2021