

**MEMORANDUM**

July 8, 2016

TO: County Council

FROM: Amanda Mihill, Legislative Attorney *AMihill*  
Linda McMillan, Senior Legislative Analyst *LMcMillan*

SUBJECT: **Action:** Bill 19-16, Health and Sanitation – Strategic Plan to Achieve Food Security

**Health and Human Services Committee/Government Operations and Fiscal Policy Committee recommendation (6-0): enact Bill 19-16 with amendments to:**

- rename the Strategic Plan and the bill title;
- assign the Plan development and annual updates to the County Executive (rather than the Chief Innovation Officer);
- require the Executive, in developing the Plan, to consult with individuals who have experience with food insecurity;
- encourage the Executive to consider regional, national, and global efforts to address food insecurity when developing the Plan; and
- removing a specific food insecurity reduction target.

Bill 19-16, Health and Sanitation – Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity, sponsored by Lead Sponsor Council Vice President Berliner and Co-Sponsors Councilmembers Leventhal, Rice, Hucker, Navarro, Elrich, and Katz, Council President Floreen, and Councilmember Riemer, was introduced on April 19, 2016. A public hearing was held on June 14 (see a statement from the County Executive on ©18-19 and select written correspondence on ©20-55). A joint Health and Human Services/Government Operations and Fiscal Policy Committee worksession was held on June 23.

As introduced, Bill 19-16 would require the Chief Innovation Officer to propose and update a Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity in Montgomery County. In developing the Strategic Plan, the CIO would be required to consult with many organizations inside and outside of County government. The Strategic Plan would include relevant demographic and geographic information on poverty and food insecurity and would also include a 5-year Plan that strives to reduce food insecurity by at least 10% each year. A memorandum from the Lead Sponsor begins on ©5.

## Issues/Committee Recommendations

**1. *Should Bill 19-16 be renamed?*** Manna Food Center (©37) and Shepherd's table (©52) recommended the Council change the name of Bill 19-16 to "the Food Security Bill". The goal being to achieve food security for all residents, rather than focusing on food insecurity. Lead Sponsor Berliner indicated his support for changing the name.

The Committees supported the goal behind this recommendation. **The Committees recommended (6-0)** changing the name of the bill to "Health and Sanitation – Strategic Plan to Achieve Food Security", the Strategic Plan name to correspond to the amended Bill name, and adding the following: (©3, line 54):

(d) This Section is known as the Montgomery County Food Security Bill.

**2. *Who should develop the Strategic Plan?*** Bill 19-16 assigns the creation of the Strategic Plan and annual updates to the Chief Innovation Officer. The statement on ©19 notes that the Executive does not object to the Chief Innovation Officer developing the Strategic Plan, but that once it is developed, it may be more appropriate to assign implementation of the Plan to the Department of Health and Human Services. Council staff is comfortable with this and **the Committees recommended (6-0)** replacing "Chief Innovation Office" with "County Executive" throughout the bill.

**3. *Who should the Executive be required to consult with?*** As amended, Bill 19-16 would require the Executive, in developing the Strategic Plan, to consult with a wide variety of stakeholders, which are listed on ©3, lines 28-43. Manna Food Center and others recommended that the individuals who have experience with food insecurity be added to the list of stakeholders that the Executive must consult with (©36).

Council staff notes that the list included in Bill 19-16 are simply the stakeholders that the Executive **must** consult with; the Executive remains free to consult with any additional stakeholders even if they are not specified in the legislation. **The Committees recommended (6-0):** adding the following (©3, line 40):

individuals who have experience with food insecurity;

**4. *How should the Strategic Plan relate to other efforts to end food insecurity?*** Several speakers at the hearing spoke about how the Strategic Plan would relate to other broader efforts to end hunger. Manna Food Center, for instance, recommended that the Plan be tied to global and national efforts to end hunger (©37). Women Who Care Ministries urged thorough research and review of best practices of other jurisdictions (©54). Maryland Hunger Solutions also underscored this issue (©39-40).

Committee members concurred that the CIO should be mindful of other efforts – locally, nationally, and globally – that have been undertaken to address food insecurity and use information gleaned, as well as best practices in other jurisdictions, in developing the Plan. Therefore, **the Committees recommended (6-0)** adding language encouraging the Executive to consider

regional, national, and global efforts to address food insecurity when developing the Plan (©2, lines 6-8).

**5. *Should the Strategic Plan have a non-profit “co-owner”?*** Manna Food Center (©37), Crossroads Community Food Network (©26), Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless (©41) and others urge the Council to amend Bill 19-16 to include a non-profit co-owner. Council staff believes that it is premature to require the Strategic Plan to have a non-profit co-owner. This is a different question than whether implementation of the Strategic Plan should have a lead agency or lead non-profit partner. Council staff believes that the answer to this question will become clearer during the Strategic Plan development. This is also a different question, than is addressed later, about the need for a contractor(s) to assist with Plan development. **The Committee did not recommend (6-0)** amending Bill 19-16 to address this issue.

**6. *How should the Strategic Plan relate to broader anti-poverty efforts?*** Manna Food Center (©37), Crossroads Community Food Network (©26), and others urged the Council to require that all goals, objectives, and accountability measures relate to and support broader anti-poverty efforts in the County. Women Who Care Ministries also urged that Bill 19-16 include focus on understanding why eligible families are not participating in the SNAP program as well as providing an emphasis on client participation and responsibility (©55).

The bill as drafted calls for inclusion of demographic and geographic information about poverty, participation in SNAP, WIC, FARMS, and other food programs, as well as access to transportation and food literacy. While none of these specifically asks for a discussion of the root causes of poverty, developing this information and discussion the solutions to what is found is most likely to address as least some of the root causes of poverty that lead to food insecurity. Council staff is concerned that adding too much language about poverty in general, while important, could cause the focus to move away from specifically addressing food security and food access. **The Committee did not recommend (6-0)** amending Bill 19-16 to address this issue.

**7. *What should the target food insecurity reduction be?*** Bill 19-16 requires the Strategic Plan to include a 5-year Plan that “strives” to reduce food insecurity by at least 10% each year, or 50% over the five years of the Strategic Plan (see ©2, lines 18-23). Several speakers suggested different targets. The Capital Area Food Bank described this target as ambitious and suggested that a specific goal should be identified after the Strategic Plan is developed (©21). Shepherd’s Table described this target as “fall[ing] short of the vision needed to end food insecurity” and seemed to suggest a 100% reduction target (©52). In his statement, the County Executive noted his belief that it is premature to put the specific target in the legislation, though noting his intention that the Strategic Plan will have measurable goals (©19). After discussion about the pros and cons of including a target goal, **the Committees ultimately recommended (6-0)** removing the 10% target (©2, line 23).

**After discussion of these issues, the Committees recommended approval of Bill 19-16 as amended.**

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Bill No. 19-16  
Concerning: Health and Sanitation – Strategic Plan to ~~[[End Food Insecurity]] Achieve Food Security~~  
Revised: 6/24/2016 Draft No. 6  
Introduced: April 19, 2016  
Expires: October 19, 2017  
Enacted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Executive: \_\_\_\_\_  
Effective: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sunset Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ch. \_\_\_\_\_, Laws of Mont. Co. \_\_\_\_\_

## COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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Lead Sponsor: Vice President Berliner  
Co-Sponsors: Councilmembers Leventhal, Rice, Hucker, Navarro, Elrich and Katz,  
Council President Floreen, and Councilmember Riemer

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**AN ACT** to:

- (1) require the ~~[[Chief Innovation Officer]]~~ County Executive to propose and update a Strategic Plan to ~~[[End Food Insecurity]]~~ Achieve Food Security in Montgomery County; and
- (2) generally amend County laws related to Health and Sanitation.

By adding

Montgomery County Code  
Chapter 24, Health and Sanitation  
Section 24-8B

<b>Boldface</b>	<i>Heading or defined term.</i>
<u>Underlining</u>	<i>Added to existing law by original bill.</i>
<b>[Single boldface brackets]</b>	<i>Deleted from existing law by original bill.</i>
<u>Double underlining</u>	<i>Added by amendment.</i>
<b>[[Double boldface brackets]]</b>	<i>Deleted from existing law or the bill by amendment.</i>
* * *	<i>Existing law unaffected by bill.</i>

*The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following Act:*

1           **Sec. 1. Section 24-8B is added as follows:**

2   **24-8B. Strategic Plan to [[End Food Insecurity]] Achieve Food Security in**  
3   **Montgomery County.**

4   (a) The [[Chief Innovation Officer]] County Executive must develop a  
5   Strategic Plan to [[End Food Insecurity]] Achieve Food Security in  
6   Montgomery County by December 1, 2016. In developing the Strategic  
7   Plan, the Executive should consider regional, national, and global  
8   efforts to address food insecurity. The Strategic Plan must at least  
9   include:

10   (1) demographic and geographic information on poverty in  
11   Montgomery County;

12   (2) demographic and geographic information on participation in  
13   Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);

14   (3) demographic and geographic information on participation in  
15   Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) food supplement program;

16   (4) participation in free and reduced meals by school;

17   (5) participation in other school based food programs;

18   (6) demographic estimates regarding food insecurity;

19   (7) information on the relationship between access to transportation  
20   and access to food;

21   (8) information on how food literacy impacts food insecurity; and

22   (9) [[A]] a 5-year Plan, with recommended actions, that strives to  
23   reduce food insecurity [[by at least 10% each year]]. The Plan  
24   must include:

25   (A) recommendations to reduce food insecurity for seniors and  
26   children in the first year of the Plan; and

27   (B) cost estimates to implement the Plan.

28 (b) In developing the Strategic Plan, the [[Chief Innovation Officer]]  
 29 Executive must consult with:

- 30 (1) the County Department of Health and Human Services;
- 31 (2) the County Department of Transportation;
- 32 (3) the County Office of Agriculture;
- 33 (4) the Regional Service Center Directors;
- 34 (5) Montgomery County Public Schools;
- 35 (6) the County Planning Department;
- 36 (7) [[The]] the Office of Community Partnerships;
- 37 (8) [[The]] the Montgomery County Food Council
- 38 (9) Manna Food Center;
- 39 (10) [[The]] the Capital Area Food Bank;
- 40 (11) individuals who have experience with food insecurity;
- 41 (12) organizations that are geographically located throughout that  
 42 County that provide emergency or sustained food assistance; and  
 43 [[12]] (13) organizations that are geographically located throughout  
 44 the County whose mission is to reduce and eliminate poverty in  
 45 the County.

46 (c) By December 1 each year, the [[Chief Innovation Officer]] Executive  
 47 must submit a report to the [[County Executive and]] County Council.  
 48 The annual report must:

- 49 (1) update the information required in Section 24-8B(a);
- 50 (2) include activities, accomplishments, plans, and objectives to  
 51 implement the Strategic Plan;
- 52 (3) include cost estimates for the following fiscal year necessary to  
 53 implement the Strategic Plan.

54 (d) This Section is known as the Food Security Bill.

## LEGISLATIVE REQUEST REPORT

Bill 19-16

### *Health and Sanitation – Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity*

**DESCRIPTION:** Bill 19-16 would require the Chief Innovation Officer to propose and update a Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity in Montgomery County.

**PROBLEM:** The County has an array of programming to address food insecurity, administered by various government departments and nonprofit organizations, but there is no strategic plan for our county to follow as we seek to address and ultimately eliminate food insecurity in the County.

**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:** To develop a strategic plan to reduce and eliminate food insecurity in the County.

**COORDINATION:** Chief Innovative Officer

**FISCAL IMPACT:** To be requested

**ECONOMIC IMPACT:** To be requested

**EVALUATION:** To be researched.

**EXPERIENCE ELSEWHERE:** To be researched.

**SOURCE OF INFORMATION:** Amanda Mihill, Legislative Attorney, 240-777-7815

**APPLICATION WITHIN MUNICIPALITIES:** N/A

**PENALTIES:** N/A



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

ROGER BERLINER  
COUNCILMEMBER  
DISTRICT 1

CHAIRMAN  
TRANSPORTATION, INFRASTRUCTURE  
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

**MEMORANDUM**

April 14, 2016

TO: Council President Nancy Floreen  
Council Colleagues

FROM: Council Vice President Roger Berliner  
Councilmember George Leventhal  
Councilmember Craig Rice

RE: Legislation to Create A Strategic Plan to Address Food Insecurity

Colleagues, we are writing to ask you to join us in co-sponsoring legislation that we plan on introducing next week. The goal of the bill is straight forward and one that we are confident all of us have a strong interest in achieving. Currently, 77,780 individuals in our county are food insecure, meaning that at any given point in time, they do not know where their next meal will come from. In a county as wealthy as ours, that is simply unacceptable.

Several months ago, in preparation for our FY17 operating budget deliberations, Council Vice President Berliner asked our Office of Management and Budget to put together an inventory showing all of the programs that receive government funding to address food insecurity in the county. The results of that inventory are attached.

What the inventory makes abundantly clear is that while our county has an array of programming to address food insecurity, administered by various government departments and nonprofit organizations, what we are lacking – to the detriment of those 77,780 individuals – is a strategic plan for our county to follow as we seek to address and ultimately eliminate food insecurity in our county.

Our County needs a plan, a plan we own. We believe that plan should, at a minimum, strive to reduce food insecurity by at least 10% a year. We will need data. And we will need our community partners to work together. That is why we are introducing this legislation, which would mandate the creation of a strategic plan for addressing food insecurity.

The plan will be developed by the Montgomery County Food Council and other key community stakeholders. As you are probably aware, the Food Council has already devoted significant time and resources to studying food insecurity in the county. Their participation, as well as the input from other public and private organizations listed in the bill, will ensure that the plan has the level of depth and analysis we need as policymakers to address the complexities surrounding food insecurity.

To make this plan a reality, we will be requesting as part of our FY17 operating budget deliberations that the Council appropriate \$75,000 to the Chief Innovation Officer to develop the plan. Food has become a significant aspect of the Chief Innovation Officer's responsibility, including spearheading the study on food hubs, working on kitchen incubators, and serving as co-chair of the Food Council itself.

We would be grateful for your co-sponsorship on this legislation, which we believe is long overdue and would greatly assist in consolidating the existing efforts in our county to address the critical issue of food insecurity. Thank you for your consideration.

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OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Isiah Leggett  
County Executive

Jennifer A. Hughes  
Director

MEMORANDUM

January 21, 2016

TO: Roger Berliner, Vice President, County Council

FROM: Jennifer A. Hughes, Director, Office of Management and Budget

SUBJECT: Request for Inventory of Hunger Relief Programs and Initiatives in Montgomery County

In response to your request for an inventory of hunger relief programs and initiatives in Montgomery County, I have attached a list of programs and initiatives supported by our County through department budgets, the Executive and Council Grants process, County contracts with community organizations, Federal and State funded programs that serve County residents, and programs administered by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) that seek to reduce hunger. The Office of Management and Budget has identified 13 programs in FY16 within the Department of Health and Human Services with a hunger component totaling \$6.2 million in County, State and Federal support. In FY16, Executive and Council grants provided \$645,330 in general funds supporting 23 grants to 15 non-profit organizations to address hunger. MCPS reports FY15 Federal reimbursement supporting the Free and Reduced Priced Meals Program totaling \$30.5 million, and FY15 State funding for the Maryland Meals for Achievement Program totaling \$165,850.

In addition, under separate cover, please find correspondence from the Montgomery County Food Council detailing their efforts to identify funding trends and areas of interest for private funders in the region.

I hope you find this information useful. We look forward to working with the Health and Human Services Committee and the County Council during FY17 budget discussions to ensure that our scarce taxpayer resources continue to be used as efficiently and effectively as possible to fight hunger in our community.

JAH:rs

cc: Tim L. Firestine, Chief Administrative Officer  
Council President Nancy Floreen  
Councilmember George Leventhal  
Councilmember Craig Rice  
Uma S. Ahluwalia, Director, Department of Health and Human Services  
Larry Bowers, Interim Superintendent, Montgomery County Public Schools  
Daniel Hoffman, Co-Chair, Montgomery County Food Council

Office of the Director

101 Monroe Street, 14th Floor • Rockville, Maryland 20850 • 240-777-2800  
[www.montgomerycountymd.gov](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov)



DHHS Programs Addressing Hunger						
Program/Grant Recipient	Service Area	Contract	FY 16 \$	Funding Source	Food Budget	Comments
Bethesda Cares	SNH	Yes	\$169,263	HHS General Funding	\$37,664	
IW Wilkins Ave. Women's Assessment Center	SNH	Yes	\$732,418	HHS General & State ETHS Funding	\$0	Do not charge us for food.
MCCH Men's Emergency Contract	SNH	Yes	\$864,421	HHS, DMCA, & State ETHS Funding	\$40,000	
Mt. Calvary Baptist Church Helping Hands	SNH	Yes	\$280,947	HHS, State ETHS and Homeless Women Grants	\$13,000	
NCCF Greentree Shelter	SNH	Yes	\$825,913	HHS General & State ETHS Funding	\$60,920	
Shepherd's Table	SNH	Yes	\$134,722	HHS General & State ETHS Funding	\$0	Does not cover food. Staffing only.
Stepping Stones Shelter	SNH	Yes	\$265,138	HHS General & State ETHS Funding	\$0	No breakdown for Food
Capitol Area Food Bank	CYF	Yes	\$97,920	county dollars	\$0	
Maryland Farmers Market Association	CYF	Yes	\$26,092	county dollars	\$0	
SNAP	CYF	No		Federal funding	\$0	
Senior Nutrition Program	ADS	Most service delivered by contract	\$778,341	general funds	\$0	
Senior Nutrition Program	ADS	Most service delivered by contract	\$1,844,405	Federal Older Americans Act Title III, State Grant, and Federal Dept. of Agriculture Nutrition Services Incentive Program(NSIP))	\$0	
Food Recovery Program/ Manna Food Center, Inc	PHS	Yes	\$160,000	HHS General Funding	\$0	The contract provides a food coordinator for the County's Food Recovery Program
		Total	\$6,179,580			

<b>FY16 Council Approved Food Grants</b>			
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Grant Type</b>
Bethesda Help	Provides for the Emergency Food Program	\$2,000	CE Grant
Community Ministries of Rockville	Provides emergency assistance for eviction prevention, utilities, prescriptions, and referrals for dental/vision services and clothing/food	\$23,000	CC Grant
Crossroads Community Food Network Inc.	Provides for a farmers market nutrition incentive program and complementary healthy eating education program	\$60,920	CC Grant
EduCare Support Services, Inc	To deliver monthly allotment of perishable and non-perishable food to senior citizens and individuals with disabilities (Housebound Clients).	\$40,000	CE Grant
First African Methodist Episcopal Church of Gaithersburg, Inc.	Provides for the SHARE food program for low-income families	\$6,410	CE Grant
Gaithersburg HELP, Inc.	Provide the basic needs of food, diapers, and formula for low-income residents in Gaithersburg/Montgomery Village.	\$25,000	CE Grant
Gaithersburg HELP, Inc.	Provides for food, diapers, and formula for low-income residents in Gaithersburg/Montgomery Village	\$5,000	CC Grant
growingSOUL Inc.	Provides for support to local farmers to introduce fresh locally grown produce into the food safety net system	\$9,750	CC Grant
growingSOUL, Inc.	Provides money to local farmers and introduces fresh locally grown produce into the food safety net system	\$20,000	CE Grant
Kids In Need Distributors, Inc.	Provides support to purchase food to be distributed to children	\$30,000	CC Grant
Manna Food Center, Inc.	Provides for bringing locally grown produce to County residents experiencing hunger and to recover produce from local farmers markets	\$20,000	CE Grant
Manna Food Center, Inc.	Provides for the Smart Sacks program for elementary school students	\$32,500	CE Grant

Manna Food Center, Inc.	Provides healthy foods for weekend meals to at least 2,440 elementary school students experiencing hunger and food insecurity	\$17,500	CC Grant
Manna Food Center, Inc.	Provides support to bring fresh produce to people experiencing hunger and rescue produce from farmers markets that may otherwise be composted or discarded	\$15,000	CC Grant
Mid-Atlantic Gleaning Network	Montgomery County Gleaning Network, provides emergency food relief by harvesting fresh fruits and vegetables and distributing to needy County residents.	\$20,000	CE Grant
MONTGOMERY COUNTY MUSLIM FOUNDATION, Inc	Our Program assists all who need help in the Montgomery County irrespective of race, religion, ethnic back ground or nationality.	\$90,000	CE Grant
Nourish Now Foundation, Inc.	Provides for operating support for the food recovery program	\$10,000	CE Grant
Nourish Now Foundation, Inc.	Provides for operating support for food recovery program	\$10,000	CC Grant
St. Camillus Catholic Church	This funding request is to purchase nutritionally adequate, culturally appropriate food to be distributed to needy families.	\$17,000	CE Grant
The Community Foundation for Montgomery County, an affiliate of the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region	Contract salary for Coordinator to support and expand the Food Council activities in fostering a healthy and sustainable food system.	\$25,000	CE Grant
The Community Foundation for Montgomery County, an affiliate of the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region	Provides for a Fiscal Impact Study on creating a Food Hub	\$25,000	CC Grant
Women Who Care Ministries	Provides for the childrens' weekend backpack program and Montgomery Village Food Center	\$130,000	CE Grant
Women Who Care Ministries	Provides for operating support for food programs	\$11,250	CC Grant
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$645,330</b>	

**FY 15 MCPS Division of Food and  
Nutrition Services Revenue**

Month	Free	Reduced	MMFA (state)
Breakfast	5,833,147	932,202	0
Breakfast Severe Need	1,079,331	212,661	0
MMFA (state)	-	0	165,850
Lunch	17,300,922	2,794,851	-
After School Snacks	174,105	23	0
After School Suppers	967,798	0	0
Summer	1,207,269	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,562,572</b>	<b>3,939,738</b>	<b>165,850</b>



January 4, 2016

Ms. Rachel Silberman  
Montgomery County Office of Management and Budget  
101 Monroe Street, 14th Floor  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Ms. Silberman,

Thank you for your response to County Councilmember Roger Berliner's November 2015 letter requesting the county government's assistance in creating a comprehensive list of Montgomery County hunger relief programs and initiatives. The Montgomery County Food Council echoes the Councilmember's assertion that this assessment is essential in order to develop a better understanding of current efforts, identify existing gaps and overlaps, and maximize the impact of the funding invested in food system work. A list of the initiatives receiving direct county funding would be an incomplete picture of the breadth and depth of food system work conducted in our County, and so the Food Council will assist as much as possible within the given timeframe to identify funding trends and areas of interest for private funders in the region. In the near term it would be difficult to provide detailed data on specific private funding and programs, but this is something we can look into in the future. For the time being we hope to provide some private sector context to the data you are gathering on County funding.

One of the greatest challenges of a decentralized funding system for hunger and other food system programs is the difficulty in creating a single strategic vision for the County. It is also very labor intensive to provide a complete picture of existing initiatives. As an independent non-profit with the mission of connecting the wide range of stakeholders in the entire Montgomery County food system, the Food Council maintains a unique position in the County. The Food Council has the most comprehensive understanding of the full food cycle in Montgomery County from table crop farmers to craft food producers, to restaurants and retail, and most importantly, to resident food consumers. The Food Council has over 100 Council and Working Group members, volunteers representing private foundations, non-profits, State and Federal government, and local businesses. These partners can help us gather information that may not be captured in County government records. In addition, we feel it is important to consider food system work as a whole, including not only hunger relief efforts but also agricultural programs and services, as well as economic and workforce development initiatives.

In 2016, the Food Council will undertake the significant task of creating a Food Charter for Montgomery County, conducting a thorough assessment of the current state of food system work and establishing a long-term strategy for addressing existing issues and gaps in effort. However, below are some resources and information that should be of value in your immediate effort.

- We are aware of over 90 organizations providing emergency food services in our area, many of which are small, community-based organizations that likely do not receive County funding.
- Some examples of recent food system projects receiving funding from non-government sources:
  - Our Food Access Working Group received a project support grant in 2015 from Kaiser Permanente to conduct a Community Food Access assessment and Healthy Food Availability Index study.
  - The Community Food Rescue project received private funding to customize the online platform for their food recovery system to better meet the specific needs of Montgomery County.
  - Compass, a Washington, D.C.- based organization that provides pro bono business consulting to non-profits, donated \$130,000 in-kind hours to help combat the hunger problem in Montgomery County.
- The Abell Foundation, Town Creek Foundation, Mead Family Foundation, TD Charitable Foundation, and Wolpoff Family Foundation, among others, all contribute over \$25,000 annually to food system efforts in Montgomery County.
- The largest food security organization in Montgomery County, Manna Food Center, receives its funding from a diversity of sources, with the majority coming from individuals and workplace campaigns (51%), private foundations (13%), and corporate donors (5%). Smaller organizations likely receive funding from fewer sources, however.
- The Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future (JHCLF) works with students, educators, researchers, policymakers, advocacy organizations, and communities to build a healthier, more equitable, and resilient food system. JHCLF is actively connected to the Food Council, supporting our Food Access Working Group efforts and the development of our policy campaign. Their mapping project provides valuable Montgomery County-specific information including farms, processors, distributors, retail outlets, and purchasing institutions: <http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-a-livable-future/index.html>
- Washington Regional Food Funders was established to develop a deeper understanding of how philanthropic investments in healthy, affordable food are made in the Greater Washington Region. <https://www.washingtongrantmakers.org/food-systems>
- The Wallace Center is part of the Enterprise and Agriculture Group of Winrock International and supports communities in developing a modern food system that is healthier for people, the environment, and the economy. A representative of this organization will join our Food Economy Working Group's efforts to explore the feasibility of a food hub in Montgomery County. <http://www.wallacecenter.org/>
- The Farming at the Metro's Edge Report summarizes the perspectives of a variety of Montgomery County stakeholders on the current state of local agriculture and the obstacles and opportunities that exist for sustainable agricultural productivity: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agservices/resources/files/famefinalreport.pdf>

We will continue to research this topic and share information as it comes available. Montgomery County is uniquely positioned to be a regional and national leader in alleviating hunger and creating a truly sustainable local food system. By reducing redundancies and maximizing collaboration across funding

sources, we can move forward with a more efficient, strategic plan to address these environmental, nutritional, social, and economic issues affecting our residents. If the Food Council can assist you further in any way, please let us know. We would welcome a conversation around creating a more comprehensive, strategic vision for food system funding in the County. Our belief is that the current mechanisms are too fragmented, making requests, such as Councilmember Berliner's request, difficult to respond to without great effort.

Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to this shared goal. We look forward to continuing to work together in 2016.

Best Regards,



Heather Bruskin, Food Council Manager

**Fiscal Impact Statement**  
**Council Bill 19-16, Health and Sanitation – Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity**

1. Legislative Summary

Bill 19-16 would require the Chief Innovation Officer to propose and update a Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity in Montgomery County and target a 10% reduction each year. The bill just establishes the creation of the plan and annual updates, it does not cover implementation or associated costs of the plan.

2. An estimate of changes in County revenues and expenditures regardless of whether the revenues or expenditures are assumed in the recommended or approved budget. Includes source of information, assumptions, and methodologies used.

The legislation does not affect County revenues. The Chief Innovation Officer anticipates requiring approximately 305 hours of staff time<sup>1</sup> to develop the strategic plan. At an average hourly cost of \$76.05, development of the strategic plan would cost \$24,794 in staff time to produce. An additional \$75,000 would be required for contracted consultant services. The Department estimates that these services would be required only in the first year of development of the strategic plan and will not incur any additional ongoing costs.

3. Revenue and expenditure estimates covering at least the next 6 fiscal years.

In the first year of development of the strategic plan, the Office of County Executive would require \$24,794 in staff time cost in addition to \$75,000 in contracted consultant services. There are no ongoing costs beyond the first year.

4. An actuarial analysis through the entire amortization period for each bill that would affect retiree pension or group insurance costs.

Not applicable.

5. An estimate of expenditures related to County's information technology (IT) systems, including Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems.

None anticipated.

6. Later actions that may affect future revenue and expenditures if the bill authorizes future spending.

The bill does not authorize any spending. The bill only establishes the creation of a plan and does not authorize or mandate future funding.

7. An estimate of the staff time needed to implement the bill.

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<sup>1</sup> Kenneth Welch, Environmental Health and Regulatory Services, HHS; Barbara Andrews, Early Childhood Services, HHS; Clark Beil, Environmental Health and Regulatory Services, HHS; Mark Hodge, Chief, Public Health, HHS; Betty Lam, Chief, Office of Community Affairs, HHS; Monica Martin, Linkages to Learning, HHS; Sharon Strauss, Community Action Agency, HHS; Daniel Hoffman, Chief Innovation Officer, CEX

See #2 above.

8. An explanation of how the addition of new staff responsibilities would affect other duties.

The project-based environment in the Innovation program means there is a continual rotation of new projects. This would simply be a new project with contractor/consultant support.

9. An estimate of costs when an additional appropriation is needed.

Implementation of the plan's recommendations will require an appropriation of funds. The legislation requires that the strategic plan include a cost estimate to implement its recommendations.

10. A description of any variable that could affect revenue and cost estimates.

None anticipated.

11. Ranges of revenue or expenditures that are uncertain or difficult to project.

None expected.

12. If a bill is likely to have no fiscal impact, why that is the case.

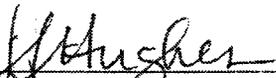
The bill only requires the creation of a plan and an annual update. Implementation of the plan is subject to the appropriation of funds. For this reason, the only fiscal impact of this bill is contractor support to assist in the creation of a plan.

13. Other fiscal impacts or comments.

None.

14. The following contributed to and concurred with this analysis:

Dan Hoffman, Office of the County Executive  
Patricia Stromberg, Health and Human Services  
Jane Mukira, Office of Management and Budget

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer A. Hughes, Director  
Office of Management and Budget

5/31/16  
Date

**Economic Impact Statement**  
**Bill 19-16, Health and Sanitation – Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity**

**Background:**

This legislation would require the Chief Innovation Officer to propose and update a Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity in Montgomery County.

The purpose of Bill 19-16 is to develop a strategic plan to reduce food insecurity by at least ten percent (10%) per year. As defined by the County Council Vice President to the County Council dated April 14, 2016, food insecurity in Montgomery County is that “at any given point in time, 77,780 individuals do not know where their next meal will come from.”

**1. The sources of information, assumptions, and methodologies used.**

There are no sources of information, assumptions, and methodologies used in the preparation of the economic impact statement. The purpose of Bill 19-16 would require the development of a strategic plan to address food insecurity with the goal of the plan to reduce such insecurity by at least ten percent per year.

**2. A description of any variable that could affect the economic impact estimates.**

The legislation will not directly affect economic impact estimates. However, the goal of the plan is to reduce food insecurity to approximately 78,000 County residents.

**3. The Bill's positive or negative effect, if any on employment, spending, savings, investment, incomes, and property values in the County.**

Bill 19-16 will not have a direct positive or negative effect on employment, spending, savings, investment, incomes, and property values in the County. The result of implementing a strategic plan would in the short- and long-run to reduce food insecurity. The economic effect of the strategic plan will be determined by the specific actions taken to implement the plan.

**4. If a Bill is likely to have no economic impact, why is that the case?**

Bill 19-16 will not have a direct economic impact. Please see paragraph #3.

**5. The following contributed to or concurred with this analysis: David Platt, Mary Casciotti, and Robert Hagedoorn, Finance.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph F. Beach, Director  
Department of Finance

4-28-16  
Date

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE REGARDING BILL 19-16,  
STRATEGIC PLAN TO END FOOD INSECURITY

June 14, 2016

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding Bill 19-16, Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity. No resident of Montgomery County should live with the fear of not knowing from where their next meal will come. This has been a commitment of County Executive Leggett's administration and, to that end, he has worked collaboratively with a wide variety of stakeholders to create a strong safety net in Montgomery County. These efforts have shown positive results, but there has been continual strain on this system as demographics in the County have changed. As such, Mr. Leggett supports a comprehensive, strategic plan to end food insecurity in Montgomery County and is pleased to share the experience and expertise of our team in working toward this goal.

Food insecurity is more than just a lack of access to healthy, affordable food. It is a symptom of deeper systemic issues, including poverty, lack of economic opportunity and educational gaps, that layer together creating substantial barriers for the approximately 80,000 County residents who do not know where their next meal will come from.<sup>1</sup> These crises are only solved temporarily by emergency food assistance, so we have worked to create a food system that respects the need for a broad spectrum of stakeholders to participate in addressing these root causes.

For about the past five years, Executive staff has worked closely with the Montgomery County Food Council, service providers such as Manna Food Center, and many of the organizations and individuals who will testify regarding this bill. We are proud of our accomplishments together. Executive staff have served on the Food Council since its inception and worked to advance its comprehensive food system approach. The Department of Health and Human Services, working with a broad network of providers, has successfully implemented Community Food Rescue, which developed from an idea and a County Council working group into a program that today rescues tons of food that would otherwise go to waste and gets it into the hands of people who need it.

Recently the Office of Management and Budget, at the request of Councilmember Berliner, conducted an Inventory of Hunger Relief Programs and Initiatives in Montgomery County. It concluded that in FY16 the County spent over \$6m on programs with a hunger component. Montgomery County Public Schools received over \$30m in federal and state funds for school-based nutrition programs. These resources represent a significant investment in ending hunger and we welcome any effort that could help make these investments more effective and efficient.

To do this, we encourage an action plan that is comprehensive in nature, and does not just provide a narrow focus on distribution of emergency food assistance. As noted, hunger is a symptom of a much more complex challenge. Therefore, we appreciate the intent of this bill to engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders. By incorporating multiple pillars of the food system, we can ensure that we end hunger by tapping into the deep food system resources at our disposal. Our agricultural community, our philanthropic and nonprofit providers, and the private sector

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<sup>1</sup> Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap study of 2014.

can work together to create a food system that views food as opportunity and a path to empowerment.

With these thoughts in mind, County Executive Leggett offers the following constructive comments on specific elements of the bill:

- The Chief Innovation Officer and the Department of Health and Human Services have worked collaboratively together for years on multiple food-related projects, including Community Food Rescue. Thus, we have no objection to the Innovation Program working across the relevant departments to create this plan. Once complete, it may be more appropriate to transfer implementation of the plan to Health and Human Services.
- Creation of the plan in FY17 will require additional resources. As noted in the fiscal impact statement, this would have an impact on staff time. However we do feel it could be accomplished with the additional funds requested in the memo by Councilmember Berliner.
- Although the end goal of the plan is to end food insecurity, we do see this as an opportunity for a broader look at the food system. Therefore, we support the work of the Food Council to align the plan outlined in Bill 19-16 with its comprehensive Food Action Plan. Given the work the Food Council has performed to study food access in the County, they are a logical partner in helping convene the broader food system community.
- The bill states that the plan should "strive to reduce hunger by at least 10% each year." Although the County Executive is a strong proponent of performance measures and, if this bill is enacted, we will create a plan if measureable goals, he believes it is premature to put this language in the legislation until we can adequately define our criteria for success.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony and we look forward to continued discussion and collaboration on this issue.

BILL 19-16

NAN  
CC  
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AM



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

850 Hungerford Drive ♦ Room 123 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850

June 6, 2016



The Honorable Roger Berliner, Councilmember  
Montgomery County Council  
Stella B. Werner Council Office Building  
100 Maryland Avenue, 6th Floor  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Mr. Berliner:

On behalf of my colleagues at the Montgomery County Board of Education, I am writing in strong support of Montgomery County Council Bill 19-16, *Health and Sanitation—Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity*.

This bill would require the chief innovation officer to propose and update a strategic plan to end food insecurity in Montgomery County. Food insecurity is a significant problem for many school-age children in Montgomery County. There are approximately 54,542 students who qualify for Free and Reduced-price Meals System (FARMS) services in our school system; in the 2015–2016 school year, 35 percent of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) students received FARMS support, with 83 percent of those students eligible for free meals. For some children, weekends and vacation periods mean that meals may be missed or the amount of food their families can provide is not sufficient for their needs.

The Board of Education and MCPS have worked closely with the County Council to help alleviate food insecurity in the County; most recently, expanding the Weekend Food Bags/*Smartsacks* program. As such, the Board welcomes any future partnerships with the County Council and supports any further work towards identifying children and efficiently delivering and distributing food.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Durso

MAD:lsh

Copy to:

- Members of the Montgomery County Council
- Members of the Board of Education
- Mr. Bowers
- Dr. Zuckerman
- Mr. Ikheloa

Maryland Regional Team  
Capital Area Food Bank  
4900 Puerto Rico Avenue, NE  
Washington, DC 20017

June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Montgomery County Council  
Council Office Building  
100 Maryland Avenue, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Council President Floreen and members of the Montgomery County Council,

My name is Dario Muralles and I am the Director of the Maryland Regional Team at the Capital Area Food Bank. As the largest organization in the Washington metro area working to solve hunger, the Capital Area Food Bank reaches 540,000 people each year with good, healthy food. That is why I'd like to take the opportunity today to express the CAFB's strong support for Bill 19-16, Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity sponsored by Councilmember Berliner and co-sponsored by Councilmember Leventhal.

In Montgomery County, over 77,000 residents struggle to get the food they need. That's 8% of the county's population. In fiscal year 2015, the CAFB delivered 4.6 million pounds of fruits, vegetables, and groceries that were distributed throughout Montgomery County through Food Assistance Partners like Manna Food Center, Nations United Baptist Church, and EduCare. We also distribute directly to clients in areas of high need; one example is our Family Market Program, a school-based monthly pop-up market at locations like Kennedy & Watkins High school. Through the council's generosity we have implemented this program at 4 school clusters and have reached over 2,500 families with over 180,000 pounds of food as of January 2016.

The CAFB supports Bill 19-16 because it would create a framework for all hunger-relief organizations in the county to follow and support. The bill would call for the creation of a 5 year plan that would include relevant demographic and geographic information on poverty and food insecurity with the goal of reducing the food insecurity level by 10% each year. This is ambitious and our suggestion would be to set a target goal *after* the plan is developed. Three years ago, the CAFB created a Hunger Heat Map, which allowed us to align our efforts in reaching seniors with Manna, to fill gaps in the hunger safety net, and avoid duplication of services. The lessons from our on-the-ground experience and data from the Hunger Heat Map have demonstrated a tremendous need for cooperation from the business, government, and non-profit sectors to not only reduce the food insecurity rate but also increase the quality of food distributed to communities suffering from diet-related illnesses. The Hunger Heat Map also reinforced for

everyone at the CAFB that hunger is *here* and it exists in every community, but we also know that together we can solve hunger.

In conclusion, I'd like to thank the council for the opportunity to testify in support of Bill 19-16 and request a favorable vote.

Thank you,

*Dario Muralles*

Dario Muralles

Director, Maryland Regional Team

Capital Area Food Bank



COMMUNITY ACTION BOARD

May 10, 2016

Montgomery County Council  
Council Office Building  
100 Maryland Avenue, 5th Floor  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Councilmembers:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Community Action Board (CAB) to express the Board's support for Council Bill 19-16 -- Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity.

Food and nutrition programs are an ongoing priority for our Board. CAB advocates for policies that will help low-income residents move towards self-sufficiency. The extremely high cost of living in Montgomery County contributes to the large number of residents, 77,780, who are food insecure.<sup>i</sup> Our Board believes that a strategic plan will help to coordinate services for these residents and, as the goal of this Bill states, reduce food insecurity by at least 10% each year.

We would also like to state our strong support for Bill 19-16's focus on senior hunger. According to the Maryland Department of Legislative Services, approximately 11.15% of County seniors (1,114 residents) are potentially eligible for SNAP benefits.<sup>ii</sup> The County's Strategic Plan can help to address the needs of these seniors and ensure that no seniors are left hungry in our community.

Included with this letter, please find a brief summary of the Community Action Agency's work to address food insecurity through its partners and direct services.

Community Action stands ready to support the Council and the Chief Innovation Officer in developing the Strategic Plan. We support the Council's efforts to reduce food insecurity and ensure that resources are reaching those in need.

Sincerely,

Matthew J. Green, Jr.  
Chairman  
Community Action Board

<sup>i</sup> Feeding America (FA) <http://feedingamerica.org/>

<sup>ii</sup> The Maryland Department of Legislative Services September 17, 2015 Letter to Senator Richard Madaleno

Department of Health and Human Services • Office of Community Affairs • Community Action Agency

2424 Reedy Drive, 2nd Floor, Suite 238 • Wheaton, Maryland 20902  
240-777-1697 (Voice or via MD Relay @ 711) • 240-777-3295 FAX  
[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/hhs](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/hhs)



The Montgomery County Community Action Agency (CAA) addresses food insecurity in Montgomery County through direct services, outreach and through its partner organizations.

#### The Takoma-East Silver Spring (TESS) Center

Since the early 70's, CAA's TESS Center has served the Long Branch community and waves of new immigrants with access to food and other resources. TESS serves as a Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NON) site, reaching even further into the community to connect residents with critical resources. TESS staff assist customers in completing applications for SNAP, WIC and other public benefits. TESS also connects its customers with food from local food programs, such as food pantries, SHARE bulk purchasing, and increases resources through participating in holiday giving programs.

#### Summer Meals Program

The TESS Center has served as a Summer Meals distribution site for two years. The Center collaborates with Montgomery County Public Schools Food and Nutrition Services to organize the summer meals distribution and comply with all requirements. In 2015, the TESS Center served 1,355 nutritious lunches meals to children throughout the summer.

#### Outreach

Community Action's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program partners with Maryland Hunger Solutions to provide outreach to tax clients regarding food and nutrition programs. VITA serves low-to-moderate income residents, many of whom struggle with food insecurity. Volunteer resource navigators meet with clients at VITA sites and provide information and pre-screening for SNAP and other food and nutrition programs. This year, the program plans to expand by providing additional outreach throughout the year with a focus on senior hunger.

#### Partners

The Community Action Agency has worked with two major food partners for over nine years: Manna Food Center and Women Who Care Ministries, monitoring contacts with and providing technical support to these organizations. Manna offers a wide variety of services, including food distribution, fresh produce programs, a weekend food program for MCPS students, food rescue, community discussions about food and nutrition, and nutritional classes. Women Who Care Ministries manages the Helping Kids Eat Backpack weekend food program with MCPS. The organization also provides food distribution to individuals, families and agencies.

Both Manna and Women Who Care Ministries are a part of the Montgomery County Food Security Collaborative, which encourages increased collaboration to conceptualize better ways to distribute food to those in need.

Community Action's other food and nutrition partners include Kids in Need Distributors, which provides weekend food for children during the school year and a summer meal program; Crossroads Community Food Network, which provides a food subsidies program (*Fresh Checks*) and operates a market program and Healthy Eating Program in MCPS, and the Mid-Atlantic Gleaning Network, which provides gleaning opportunities and fresh produce for low-income residents.

All of the CAA's food partners are involved with the Montgomery Food Council. The Council addresses food access, recovery, literacy, economy and environmental impact. The Council also works closely with Maryland Hunger Solutions, working to fight hunger and improve the nutrition, health, and well-being of children and families in Maryland.

#### Early Childhood

As the County's grantee for Head Start, CAA monitors the program to assure that the federal standards related to nutrition are fully met.

TESS hosts the Judy Center based at Rolling Terrace Elementary School, twice a week at the TESS Center and links with the program to ensure participants are aware of County food resources.

#### Community Action Board Advocacy

The Community Action Board (CAB) has been a long-time advocate for food and nutrition programs. CAB has supported legislation to fully fund and increase SNAP benefits, expand school breakfast programs, and expand summer meals for children.

CAB has advocated for family supports in order to maximize family resources for food. Such policies include increasing the minimum wage and expanding Earned Income Tax Credits.

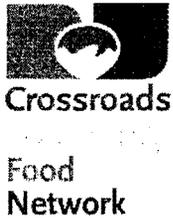
CAB supports use of the Self Sufficiency Standard (SSS) as an accurate measure of the cost of living in Montgomery County. Since the SSS includes location-based information about the cost of basic necessities, including food, the SSS provides a more accurate measure of the number of people struggling to make ends meet in the County. Currently, the CAB is working with Community Action partners throughout the state to update the SSS for 2016.

CAB routinely updates information included in the Faces of Poverty report, which summarizes poverty data. The data includes important statistics about hunger and food insecurity.

In 2015, CAB hosted several poverty forums in Gaithersburg, East County, and the TESS Center. The forums provided an opportunity for low-income residents to share their concerns and recommendations regarding issues impacting them and their families. Food access was noted by many participants as a primary concern. CAB has used this information in its advocacy efforts, providing information to the County Council and the County Executive.

19

6930 Carroll Avenue  
Suite 426  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



19  
6930 Carroll Avenue  
Suite 426  
Takoma Park, MD 20912

**Testimony before the Montgomery County Council  
in support of Bill 19-16, Health and Sanitation – Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity  
Presented June 14, 2016**

President Floreen and members of the County Council, my name is Christie Balch, and I am the Executive Director of Crossroads Community Food Network. Crossroads is building a healthier, more inclusive food system in the primarily immigrant, low-income community of Takoma/Langley Crossroads. Founded in 2007 as a seasonal farmers market, Crossroads originated the idea of using private funds to double federal nutrition benefits when people use them to buy fresh fruits and vegetables at the market – making healthy food more affordable while supporting local farmers.

Crossroads now also encompasses community-based healthy eating education and microenterprise training for food business entrepreneurs. By connecting and empowering those who grow, make, and eat nutritious foods, Crossroads is helping an underserved community attain food equity and self-sufficiency.

We are grateful to the County Council for support of Crossroads, and we applaud your support of farmers market incentives throughout the county—at our farmers markets and others who are replicating our model.

We are so pleased to be part of this hearing—alongside such important organizations—and would like to thank the sponsors of this bill. We're happy to see the prospect of a food secure Montgomery County and feel this legislation has great potential to achieve lasting change.

We support recommendations made by Manna Food Center and others to strengthen this legislation. Specifically, we would like to emphasize:

- 1) The plan should have a nonprofit co-owner to ensure this will be a multi-stakeholder effort and to include voices of those who experience food insecurity.
- 2) The county must link this work with efforts being made on upstream factors related to economic and social inequalities. Since the root cause of food insecurity isn't a lack of food, but rather a lack of income, poverty reduction needs to be a major focus for the county.

Thank you all for your efforts to ensure every Montgomery County resident is food secure.

26



June 14, 2016

To Whom it May Concern,

Thank you for opening the doors to energizing a practical conversation on developing a strategic plan to end food insecurity in Montgomery County. My grassroots non-profit organization, growingSOUL – Sustainable Opportunities for Universal Learning – creates, implements and advocates for sustainable, interconnected, reciprocity-based food systems benefiting the vitality of our communities and their residents as well as our planet. Our systems connect residents to one another and our earth, and in the process of growing food, helps grow our SOULs. With our farming sites located on historic Underground Railroad land in the east county, we continue the regional legacy of striving for freedom and food for all as we replenish soils by composting on them, and feed communities in need from our crops.

We demonstrate zero-waste food systems in our 2 main programs: through small-scale gardening and composting with low-carbon footprints in “YardLink”; and we address food production/recovery/preservation/recycling in our “Putting Stock in Your Community” program. Our food is delivered throughout the county in vehicles that run on waste vegetable oil from the tortilla fryers at local Chipotle Mexican Grill restaurants that we collect and filter at a local farm. Our “Culinerati” work force consists of permaculture experts at The Harvest Collective, adults with disabilities from St. Colettas, MCPS students seeking SSL hours, businesses seeking to give back, and volunteers from the community-at-large. They are a diverse, multi-generational team engaging hands-on in becoming lifelong learners, connectors and part of growing a movement, not apart from it.

I have been working in partnership with other non-profits, businesses, government and the community-at-large to build a sustainable, resilient food system infrastructure for over 6 years in the county. I co-founded the Montgomery County Food Council and sat as their Coordinator for a year, and have been an active leader in both the Environmental Impact and Food Recovery Working Groups since its inception. growingSOUL has been the ONLY non profit in the county that combines food production, processing, distribution and composting and the only SSL opportunity for volunteers in the food system as young as 10 with no parental supervision. Our leadership in community collaboration earned awards from Silver Spring Impact and GOCA. Our ability to collaborate and advocate with other non-profits, businesses, schools and government lead to our government appointment to represent food recovery and composting needs for the county on the Solid Waste Advisory Committee.

Our recent connection with the Maryland Food Center and Maryland Packaging helps the state dramatically reduce its waste stream, helps food businesses be eligible for tax deduction benefits while simultaneously allowing Montgomery County to save money, landfill space and time by providing an entire food recovery infrastructure with the potential to divert 300,000 pounds of fresh food monthly.

We currently provide zero-waste services to a wholesale distributor that has been throwing out 10,000 pounds of food weekly, and is now donating it to growingSOUL for an IRS Tax Deduction. We triage the food to regional non-profits that distribute directly to families, process it into wholesome meals, and/or send it to farmers for animal feed. Anything un-utilized by the agencies along with their other compostables may be brought back to Jessup for recycling via composting, eliminating 10,000 pounds of food currently wasted in our landfills weekly. The state-run Maryland Wholesale Produce and Seafood Markets has asked us to provide this service for 15,000 pounds of food daily collected at the Maryland Food Center. Additionally, we are currently negotiating a partnership with Maryland Packaging for use of their commercial kitchen and packing plant for our workforce development program to create processed and preserved food for donation.

The infrastructure for refrigeration, inventory, transportation and composting, as well as for food processing, preserving, and packing, is built into the warehouse of our business partners, Coosemans DC and Maryland Packaging. There are 15,000 pounds of wholesome food available daily at the state's wholesale produce and seafood market, as well as a full processing kitchen and co-packing plant. Triaging and processing the food on site and distributing in trucks bound for Safeways daily saves carbon footprint and offers a tax deduction per mile to the distributor. Donating the seconds for the whole market to growingSOUL means a Montgomery County-based non-profit has access to 75,000 pounds of wholesome food and the infrastructure to triage, process and redistribute it weekly. In only one week operating with one distributor, we donated 18 pallets of food totaling over 12,000 pounds to DC Central Kitchen, Manna, Rainbow Development Center and Nourish Now.

Unfortunately, most of the infrastructure needed to take advantage of all of this food does not exist in Montgomery County. Only 2 agencies in the county, Manna and Nourish Now, have the capacity to come pick up these tens of thousands of pounds of food, and with their current capacity, can only come once a week. Several are able to take food if we deliver it, but their buildings do not have loading docks, they do not have guaranteed staff to be there to unload properly, and many others lack adequate storage. Much of the recovered food needs to be processed and preserved as it is food deemed unsellable by wholesalers, and they tend to hold it as long as possible to try and sell as much as they can. I recently had 6 8' x 4' pallets of ripe papaya and mango that was "too soft" to be given directly to a family, but perfect to be made into juices or processed into dehydrates, but there was no Montgomery County kitchen with enough space to process it.

While growingSOUL was generously given 2 years to work for free at a church commercial kitchen, we were able to process thousands of pounds of such food monthly, turning it into juices, stocks, stuffings, jams and dehydrates. Unfortunately, our contract

was not renewed because we got too big for our space. In rescuing and preparing more food, we worked our way out of donated space. Commercial kitchens in Montgomery County are severely limited, even for paying businesses. The only kitchen that is available with enough space for our volunteer work force costs upward of \$2000 a month, something we had not budgeted for, but must come up with in order to continue our programming. It has been a double-edged sword – the more we expand the amount of food we recover and our capacity to process that food, the more expensive it gets to make it. As a charity donating 90% of all of the food we process, we are dependent upon grants to do so. growingSOUL is proud to have been supported by grants from our County Executive and County Council for the past 4 of our 6 years. That support has kept the doors of our single full time employee non-profit open, making a small dent in our county needs. Unfortunately, our funding for our processing program was cut this year, so without funding to rent space in a kitchen, we are having to turn to other partners, and the partners who are wanting to work with us and have the capacity to handle the amount of food to which we now have access are not in Montgomery County.

So here is the dilemma. Now that growingSOUL access to Maryland State infrastructures, we have greatly expanded our capacity to bring food into the county. But as we are now tasked with solving food insecurity for our county, we will need not only a collaborative plan with enthusiastic capacity partners, but an infusion of millions of dollars of financial investment to create the necessary infrastructure to properly store, process, redistribute, recycle and produce more food within the county. I submit, we open ourselves to looking into a regional solution, with partners who may already have the infrastructure. We all need to be a part of the solution, and be willing to look to our neighbors for help.

You have heard from many organizations stepping up to play their role in this monumental task. The will is clearly abundant in the county. The urgency is real. I look forward to being a part of this team moving forward on this critical journey to keep our neighbors fed and this county thriving.



To: Montgomery County, MD Councilmembers

From: Rose Clifford, RDN, MBA

As a longtime Montgomery County, MD resident, senior hunger advocate, practicing health professional, and subject matter expert on the nutritional needs of older adults, I support the development of a strategic plan to end food insecurity in Montgomery County. A good start towards this was the recent authorization by Governor Hogan of Senate Bill 758, increasing the minimum Food Supplement Program benefit from \$16 to \$30 per month for 18,000 seniors 62 and older statewide. While no one should go hungry or lack access to sufficient healthy food, older adults are particularly vulnerable to the effects of food insecurity, hunger, and sub-optimal nutrition. Their needs must have a seat and a voice at the table in Bill 19-16.

Nationwide, food insecurity among older adults is increasing. Senior hunger is a health issue with very high personal and economic costs. Senior malnutrition is often a “hidden secret” with devastating individual suffering and societal consequences. The estimated annual cost of disease-associated malnutrition in older adults in the US is \$51.3 Billion (Snider, JT, et al. JPEN, 2014). Astoundingly, marginal food insecurity in older adults is functionally equivalent to being 14 years older (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 2010)?

Food and nutrition issues are so important to good health and life quality for older adults, but are often poorly understood or go unrecognized. According to the DefeatMalnutrition.Today coalition, up to 1 out of 2 older adults are at risk for malnutrition and up to 60% of hospitalized older adults may already be malnourished. Malnutrition increases the length of hospital stays, and leads to more complications such as falls and readmissions. Eighty-seven percent of older adults have one of more chronic diseases with nutritional implications, and based on the Healthy Eating Index, 83% of older adults do not consume a good quality diet.

It’s also important to understand that senior hunger and malnutrition is not limited to low income seniors but is a phenomenon that cuts across all income spectrums and is often an access issue. Factors such as poor appetite, unintentional weight loss and frailty, isolation, decreased mobility, cognitive decline, psychosocial and mental health issues, nutrient deficiencies, poor oral health, and lack of transportation are common contributing factors to senior food insecurity and malnutrition. For these and other reasons, older adults are often unable to plan, procure, prepare, or consume adequate meals.

For households that fall below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, Maryland has the nation’s 7<sup>th</sup> highest food insecurity rate among adults aged 50-59 (33.9%) and the 8<sup>th</sup> highest food insecurity rate among those 60+ (18.7%). The National Foundation

to End Senior Hunger's June 1, 2016 release of the State of Senior Hunger in America 2014 annual report found that 12.41% of Maryland seniors overall face the threat of hunger. There is limited information on the percentage of Montgomery County seniors who face the threat of hunger, but the Montgomery County Senior Subcommittee on Vital Living found that in 2012, 8,060 Montgomery County seniors were living below the poverty line, up 29.5% from 2009.

Putting an end to senior hunger and food insecurity in Montgomery County, MD requires a coordinated effort and strategy, and Bill 19-16 deserves our Council's full support.

Sincerely,

Rose Clifford, RDN, MBA

Nutrition Program Manager

Iona Senior Services

4125 Albemarle St., NW

Washington, DC 20816

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**INTERFAITH WORKS**

[www.iworksmc.org](http://www.iworksmc.org)

**STATEMENT OF SHANE C. ROCK**  
**CEO, Interfaith Works**  
**June 14, 2016**

Re: Bill 19-16 - Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity

Interfaith Works supports Bill 19-16, which directs the County Innovation Officer to craft a Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity in collaboration with the Montgomery County Food Council, Manna, and a wide variety of government, community, and nonprofit organizations working to increase food security and decrease poverty in our county. Access to healthy, nutritious and sufficient food is a vital prerequisite for people to lift themselves out of poverty and become more self-sufficient.

Interfaith Works is committed to empowering vulnerable people to lift themselves out of poverty. One component of that commitment is addressing food security needs of those we serve. Our Project INFORM program, housed at the Interfaith Works Clothing Center in Rockville, connects families in need with vital resources. Last year, food security was their top need – more than 60 percent of the 443 people served by Project INFORM sought referrals for food assistance from our community partners. In addition, Interfaith Works volunteers donated in excess of 50,000 meals to feed residents at our Rockville women's shelter.

These examples underscore both the need in our community and the fact that there are many partners working in concert to address the food security needs of those struggling in our County. Inclusion of diverse organizations and voices in the planning and implementation of the strategic plan will be critical for the success of this worthy effort. We urge the Council to direct the County Innovation Officer to include a broad array of organizations that not only reflect geographic diversity, but also represent grassroots efforts, faith-based efforts, and diverse populations.

Of course, drafting a realistic, effective plan is only the first step in the process. Sufficient resources will be required to implement the plan, and to gather the data necessary to measure the impact of the efforts. We applaud the Council for including data collection, analysis, and cost estimation in the charge for the County Innovation Officer. The CIO's reports to the Council should include not only the government data and cost estimates, but also those of the community and nonprofit organizations that will be doing much of the direct work in our communities.

We are grateful for the leadership of Councilmember Berliner in sponsoring this legislation, and for Councilmembers Rice and Leventhal for co-sponsoring. This legislation reflects the collective will of the Montgomery County Council to address a vital socio-economic issue for too many of our County neighbors. We have an opportunity to create a cohesive, thoughtful approach to ensure those struggling in our community have enough to eat.



June 22, 2016

Montgomery County Council President Nancy Floreen  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, MD 20850

**RE: Comments on *Bill 19-16, Health and Sanitation – Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity***

Dear Council President Nancy Floreen and Members of the County Council:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington (JCRC), which is the public affairs and community relations arm of the Jewish community, representing over 100 Jewish organizations and synagogues throughout Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The JCRC has a strong commitment to the Jewish community and community at-large to help continue to cultivate a society based on freedom, justice and pluralism. We remain faithful to our four pillars of government relations, Israel advocacy, inter-group relations and social justice. The JCRC works tirelessly throughout the entire Greater Washington area to advocate support for our agencies who serve the most vulnerable residents and to campaign for important policy interests on behalf of the entire Jewish community.

Therefore, we would like to advocate our strong support for Bill 19-16, which will enhance and help the County learn better ways to address food insecurity throughout the entire area. Creating a strategic plan to reduce and eliminate food insecurity, goes to the heart of making sure that everyone no matter what knows where their next meal will be coming from. Unfortunately, even in Montgomery County, the reality is that someone may either go hungry or risk losing their home.

The Jewish Community has even seen a rise nationally of new kosher food banks in response to the growing needs in their areas. And we know that here even in our own community many are struggling to feed their families. Tzedakah, which is translated to charity, is a pillar of the Jewish way of life. We are taught that it is a Mitzvah (good deed) to give Tzedakah and that we should always go one step beyond to share what we have with others and that includes providing meals to everyone in need.

The JCRC highly encourages the Council to quickly move forward with Bill 19-16. We sincerely thank the members of the County Council for consideration of our perspective on this very important issue.

Sincerely,

Meredith R. Weisel, Esq.  
Director of Maryland Government and Community Relations

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# JEWES UNITED FOR JUSTICE

Hollande Levinson  
Jews United for Justice  
110 Ridgepoint Place  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878  
404-823-2404

## Testimony in Support of Bill 19-16, Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity

This written testimony in support of Bill 19-16 is submitted on behalf of Jews United for Justice, a volunteer driven organization that leads Jews from Montgomery County, as well as in DC and Baltimore, to act on our shared Jewish values through grassroots civic engagement.

JUFJ supports this bill because hunger and food insecurity are issues of justice. Currently, almost 78,000 individuals in our county are food insecure. In a county as wealthy as ours, that is simply unacceptable.

We are please the bill includes our exiting nonprofits as central to the planning process. This is important to us. Existing nonprofits with successful track records are central to this process. They are on the front lines and know intimately the challenges we face, and they should be at the heart of any plan to address this critical issue. Those leading the planning process shouldn't assume that "new" is "better." They should equally consider that existing organizations simply need *more resources* and *more stable funding sources* to provide services to more people in need—whether that's more multilingual staff or satellite locations in underserved areas, etc.

We also appreciate and want to emphasize the bill's charge to look at poverty more broadly, as we know that food insecurity is inextricably linked with other aspects of poverty such as low wage jobs, lack of affordable housing, etc. Examining this intersectionality as part of the plan is crucial.

As you know, JUFJ strongly backed the Council in voting for a property tax increase, because it was simply the only way to generate the revenue we need to address growing poverty and inequality in our community. As a result, we would expect, moving forward, that the Council will appropriate adequate funds for the *solutions* the plan suggests. For example, after investing so much in our schools, we should remind ourselves that kids can't learn when they have unstable housing. They don't have enough support at home when parents are working two and even three jobs to make ends meet. And of course kids can't learn when they are hungry.

Our Jewish tradition tells us we have a strong obligation to provide food for *all* of our community. As the great Rabbi, Rambam, teaches us, in just one example of his Laws of Gifts to the Poor: "One who reaps his field should not reap the whole field entirely but rather he should leave a little bit of standing grain for the poor at the edge of

the field, as it is written, (Lev. 23:22) You shall not reap all the way to the edges of the field.” He goes on to teach that this obligation extends to not only all types of food producers but to each of us as individuals. That obligation is so strong that he states, “A poor person whom you do not know, who says: ‘I’m famished, feed me!—there is no need to check up on him to see if it’s a ruse, rather one should supply him with food.”

We want to thank lead Sponsor Vice President Berliner and cosponsors, Councilmember Leventhal and Councilmember Rice for their bold vision to end food insecurity in our County. Let’s make it happen.



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## Testimony before the Montgomery County Council

### in support of Bill 19-16, Health and Sanitation - Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity

Presented June 14, 2016

President Floreen and members of the County Council, my name is Jackie DeCarlo, and I am the Executive Director of Manna Food Center, an organization created by the community to end hunger in Montgomery County. I am also a member of the Montgomery County Food Council, on the board of Nonprofit Montgomery, and on the Advisory Council of Maryland Hunger Solutions.

With a mission like ours Manna is, of course, very pleased to be part of this public hearing. I would like to thank especially Vice President Berliner for his sponsoring of Bill 19-16 and the co-sponsors on the HHS Committee, Council Member Leventhal and Council Member Rice. I know all three of you to be champions of our neighbors experiencing food insecurity.

I would also like to recognize Council Members Elrich and Navarro for their leadership in support of weekend bag programs for students experiencing food insecurity, Council Member Hucker for his commitment to Community Food Rescue, and Council Members Katz and Reimer for their interest in Farm to Food Bank. I also want to recognize President Floreen for her leadership in protecting the social safety net during recent budget deliberations.

As the draft legislation states, estimates suggest as many as 78,000 of our neighbors do not always know where their next meal is coming from in this great county. In the first three quarters of this fiscal year, Manna had the honor of serving 29,339 of those individuals at least once. 31% of the households who receive food from us monthly are headed by our elders, and at the other end of the age spectrum, every week we reach 2,493 elementary school students with healthy ingredients for family friendly meals. Our clients are as diverse and beautiful as our county—44% identify as White, 35% as African American, and 6% as Asian. 34% of our clients are Hispanic or Latino. 70% of the households Manna serves are headed by women. Beyond statistics, we know our clients are often the working poor, under or unemployed and unable to make ends meet, particularly if facing a medical or other crisis.

Given the complexity of hunger and poverty, and the range of individual circumstances, I am fond of saying that no one agency will be able to end food insecurity. That is why a strategic

plan focused on collective efforts is an important undertaking. Manna is proud stand with our peers in the “anti-hunger space,” many of whom you are hearing from today. Our reach is broadened through collaborations such as:

- 256 agencies including congregations, government agencies, and social services organizations regularly refer clients to Manna. These partnerships have resulted in **33,321 food orders so far this fiscal year.**
- Our Smart Sacks weekend bag program operates in **60 MCPS elementary schools through the efforts of 55 civic partners.** We appreciate the recent support the Council showed by investing in the coalition Manna formed with two other weekend bag providers: KIND and Women Who Care Ministries.
- The Community Food Rescue network has also benefitted from Council support and grew from 11 organizations to 20 in only one year, **rescuing almost \$5million worth of food in 2015.**
- Our Farm to Food Bank program has work with farmers such as Red Wiggler Community Farm to **support the local economy and workforce development,** while also providing fresh produce to our clients.
- In cooperation with Maryland Hunger Solutions, our new Food Stamp outreach is based at our new office at Silver Spring United Method Church. In less than two months **40 households have received Food Stamp benefits.**
- Manna’s work is made possible thanks to the contributions of 8,000 individual and institutional donors including local businesses, congregations, and private foundations. **Approximately 80% of our funding comes from sources other than public funds.**

Despite these alliances, food security is not yet a reality for all Montgomery County residents. Manna supports the creation of a strategic plan that will be an essential element of the Montgomery County Food Action Plan to be created by the Food Council. **Manna Food Center has several recommendations to strengthen the legislation:**

- 1) Include on the list of required organizations and entities to consult, **individuals who have the lived experience of food insecurity.** For a strategic plan to truly be successful it will need to be informed and shaped by those who have the most at stake—the mothers of children at risk of going to school on Monday unprepared to learn, the seniors who face multiple health concerns and barriers to accessing nutritious, affordable food, the working families who never imagined themselves relying on charitable aid. DHHS Director Ahluwalia often speaks of the safety net as a trampoline that helps people bounce back. To achieve this vision, **we must build on the insights of people navigating the uncertain and unpredictable tight rope walk from paycheck to paycheck.**

- 2) Instruct the Chief Innovation Officer to develop a strategic plan that is tied to global and national efforts to end hunger. Manna has endorsed the **United Nation's Zero Hunger Challenge** as well as the EPA and USDA's challenge to reduce food waste by 50%. The timetable for those efforts is 2030. The Montgomery County plan should also incorporate key strategies of the Food and Research Action Center's 8 point plan to end hunger in the United States. These global and national frameworks will **replicate a best practice of our local Campaign to End Veteran Homelessness**: that of learning from and utilizing models piloted in other communities.
  
- 3) Another feature of the Veteran Homelessness campaign was its commitment to interagency and multi stakeholder participation. The call for this legislation notes the need for policy makers to "own" a strategic plan. In fact, the strategic plan needs a **not-for-profit co-owner who has community based, collaborative, operational expertise in addressing hunger**. Please consult the model of the Maryland Partnership to End Childhood hunger, which was co-led by the Governor's Office and a not-for-profit, Share Our Strength. Along these same lines, the County needs to recognize that financial support of the plan is necessary but far from sufficient. **This effort will call upon private philanthropy, the business sector, and individuals to invest and sustain the effort.**
  
- 4) The legislation should mandate that all goals, objectives and accountability measures relate to and support broader anti-poverty efforts in the county, such as pursuing Interfaith Works' goal to shrink the poverty rate to make Montgomery County the lowest rated county in Maryland by 2022. **Food insecurity is not a stand-alone issue but a symptom of economic and societal inequities that need to be addressed systemically and in concert with other issues of concern.**
  
- 5) Finally, we request that the County change the name of the legislation. Make this the Food Security Bill as a **bold declaration that in Montgomery County "... all people at all times [will] have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life"**. That is the definition of food security created by the United Nations. A **positive, expansive vision of food security** communicates the intent of a plan that will make sure that across zip codes, neighborhoods, districts, and regions we will move away from a scarcity mentality into creating a prosperous community for all.

Council Members, this legislation alone will not end hunger, but it is a tremendously important and ambitious start. The strategic plan will **strengthen existing programs and generate new solutions**. It will **galvanize** existing supporters and attract new constituents. It will create **broader and deeper opportunities** for residents to discover that the giving and receiving of food builds **new networks of community engagement**. Manna is ready to work alongside our peer agencies and county agencies to help co-create a Five Year Plan by December of this year. Thank you for your support of Bill 19- 16 and for the real prospect of a Food Secure Montgomery County.



# Maryland Hunger Solutions

*Ending hunger and promoting well-being*

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Testimony on Bill 19-16, before the Health and Sanitation Committee of the Montgomery County Council

The Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity

By

Michael J. Wilson, on behalf of Maryland Hunger Solutions

My name is Michael J. Wilson and I am the Director of Maryland Hunger Solutions, a non-partisan, nonprofit with the single goal of eliminating hunger in the state of Maryland. A project of the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), we use advocacy, outreach, education and collaboration and focus on utilizing the existing federal food and nutrition programs. We are proud to share space with the other local community organizations and anti-hunger activists to participate in this hearing. We believe that this is a good start to of the process of ending food insecurity in the county, but with important provisions.

In outline form, those provisions are --

**First** – Montgomery County is not the first county to attempt to do this. Palm beach County funded a county plan of nearly 100 pages ([Here](#) is a link, on the FRAC Website). It's worth examining, not because Montgomery County Maryland and Palm Beach County Florida are similar, but because some of the causes and responses to hunger are similar. Here in Maryland, we have worked with specific jurisdictions and funders to create what we call a "Road Map to Maximize Nutrition and Student Wellness through the Federal Nutrition Programs". There is a Baltimore City version, a Howard County Version, and a Maryland State version. These are the Road Maps for which there were funding, capacity, and local leadership to create. In addition, our national organization, the Food research and Acton Center has developed a plan to end hunger, with [Eight Essential Strategies To End Hunger](#). While national in scope, they have applicability to local anti-hunger efforts.

**Second** – It's important to understand the regional, state, and federal context which will impact the plan. When the Maryland Farmer's Market Program raises money to fund the Maryland Money program – to provide financial incentives for FSP and WIC recipients to spend their benefits at local farmers markets, Montgomery County benefits. When the state legislature funds a state supplement for households with a member 62 and over so they get more than \$16 a month - \$16 a month – up to \$30 a month, Montgomery County benefits. (Washington D.C. enacted a similar program, and that also impacted Montgomery County.) When the welfare reform law of the 1990s forces Maryland to give up its statewide waiver so that 8 jurisdiction has to impose new time limits on so-called Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDS) are limited to

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receiving FSP benefits for 3 months in a 3 year period – Montgomery County is impacted because 1561 residents faced those time limits. When the Congress of the United States is considering legislation to relax nutrition standards for school meals, offering block grant school meals, and wants to revisit the formula for community eligibility – well, Montgomery County is affected. State and federal elected officials must also be a part of the plan, and the Washington Area Council of Governments must also be a part of the plan, just as the Washington Area Regional Association of Grantmakers has.

**Third** – it’s critical to understand – and to address – the underlying causes of hunger. There is a simple one word answer as to why there is hunger; it’s poverty.

And **Fourth** – the plan must have enough flexibility, capacity and political support to adjust to circumstances.

This is a long and complicated path. Many will testify before you today speaking of their programs and the impact that they are making. It is all part of a broad tapestry, but beyond a meal here and a meal there, the challenge of ending food insecurity takes commitment, collaboration, and understanding. A success plan will include as many stakeholders as possible and will be as robust, comprehensive, and inclusive as the county itself.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, “I have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for the minds and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits.”

# # #

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**Written Testimony from  
Susie Sinclair-Smith, Executive Director of Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless  
In Support of Bill 19-16, Health and Sanitation – Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity**

Good Afternoon.

I am here today to express the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless' (MCCH) full support of Bill 19-16 that would create a Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity. Since food insecurity touches all 1700 clients that MCCH serves each year in our emergency and permanent supportive housing, MCCH applauds the MC Council for proposing a strategic approach to eradicate the unacceptable condition of hunger in our County. I believe tackling this problem is possible based upon my recent involvement with the County's successful Zero 2016 campaign to end veteran homelessness, resulting in Montgomery County becoming one of only four communities nationwide to reach functional zero for homeless veterans.

The Zero: 2016 campaign's success was based on four key elements, which if replicated, will be instrumental in a community-wide strategic effort to address food insecurity.

These four elements were:

- The political will to address the issue,
- A time-bound sense of urgency,
- Identification of necessary strategic system changes and allocation of resources accordingly, and
- A public-private partnership.

Bill 19-16 includes the first three elements - a clear demonstration of the political will needed to create real and lasting change; time bound goals that create urgency for the plan; and recognition of the need for systemic change as evident in the bill's requirement to gather input from a variety of entities in the public and private sectors.

MCCH recommends that the public-private partnership that was essential in ending veteran homelessness be added as an element in the plan and its eventual implementation taking into consideration the many ways our community feeds people who experience food insecurity. MCCH volunteers donated furniture, household necessities, and 2 weeks of food for each veteran when they moved into permanent housing. Also, MCCH could not operate our men's emergency shelter without the significant support of our community which donated more than 100,000 meals last year – over 70% of all meals served.

While MCCH ensures that our clients in our emergency programs receive 3 meals a day throughout the year, I want to speak on behalf of the 400 households in our permanent supportive housing programs. These clients are amongst the most vulnerable residents in our community and rely on food stamps and local food pantries. But despite the best efforts of everyone involved in addressing hunger, our clients regularly ask case managers for help getting

more food. Food stamps for a single person with no income, which is a reality for some MCCH clients, only provides \$6.16 per day for food. And though we are truly grateful for our partners such as Manna and other local food pantries, they are forced to limit our clients' access to food due to their funding limitations. Our clients are further challenged by their lack of access to foods that are fresh, unprocessed, and lower in sugar and sodium. Given their health issues, they need more of these kinds of foods but are forced to consume less healthy options based on what they can access and afford.

The experience of homeless is integrally related to the experience of food insecurity. Montgomery County's Self Sufficiency wage standard the income that a household needs to live in Montgomery County accounting for the costs of rent, food, medical and child care, transportation and taxes. Without public assistance, annually a single mother with an infant and toddler needs to make \$78,000; and a single adult needs a job paying \$36,000. If someone experiences a medical crisis or loses the job, difficult household choices need to be made about spending priorities often at the expense of buying food or paying rent.

I urge you to support Bill 19-16 so that we can create a community where everyone has a safe, stable and affordable place to call home and no one is forced to go hungry.



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June 14, 2016

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY FOOD COUNCIL TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF BILL 19-16**

Good afternoon. My name is Heather Bruskin and I am the Manager of the Montgomery County Food Council. Thank you to Councilmember Berliner for introducing this innovative and ambitious legislation, and to Councilmembers Leventhal and Rice for your support of this important effort.

The Montgomery County Food Council is an independent council that serves as the primary connection point for all stakeholders interested in improving the environmental, economic, social, and nutritional health of the County through the creation of a robust, sustainable local food system. The Food Council is named in the bill as a lead collaborator in the development of the Strategic Plan, and we agree that the plan's creation is essential to the development of a better understanding of current food security initiatives, to the identification of existing gaps and overlaps, and to the maximization of the impact of the funding invested in food system work.

Food system reform is active worldwide, and Montgomery County is uniquely positioned to be a regional and national leader in alleviating hunger and creating a truly sustainable local food system. While our County faces challenges, we also have the resources and political support for transformational change that will not only eradicate hunger, but also promote health and increase food equity.

By reducing redundancies and maximizing collaboration, we can move forward with a more efficient, strategic plan to address food insecurity and the related issues affecting our residents. We believe that the issue of hunger cannot be examined or addressed independently of the full food system, and economic landscape, of our county. Food Access and Recovery, Food Economy, Food Literacy, and the environmental impact of food production and waste, are all inextricably linked. Food insecurity is a significant symptom of a deeper problem, and it is essential that we take a comprehensive systems approach to our action plan. The developing food access crisis in Eastern Montgomery County, where the closure of one food retailer has transferred the responsibility for providing nutritious food to local residents to hunger relief organizations that are already stretching their limited resources, is an excellent example of the need to strengthen connectivity in our entire food system. While existing local, State, and Federal emergency food assistance programs play a central and essential role in addressing hunger in our County, funding for these resources is not entirely reliable in the long term. Without addressing the true root causes of food insecurity in our County, we will be unable to establish a truly sustainable solution to this issue.

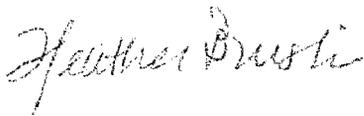
The Food Council has the most comprehensive understanding of the full food cycle in Montgomery County, enabling us to lead this important effort in collaboration with a wide range of established partners, including our over 100 Council and Working Group members who represent private foundations, non-profits, government agencies, community organizations, and local businesses. We will leverage these existing relationships to develop a plan that represents the collective expertise, needs, and growth opportunities of not only our hunger-related partners but also those addressing poverty, workforce and economic

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development, agricultural production, education, and land and water use. Our strong partnerships with the DC Food Policy Council, Prince George's Food Equity Council, the Chesapeake Foodshed Network, and others, are also essential to maximize opportunities for food policy and distribution within the regional value chain.

There is currently no existing comprehensive picture of the breadth and depth of hunger relief and food system work being done in our County. In order to create a more comprehensive, strategic vision for all food system work in Montgomery County, in 2016, thanks to the generous financial support of the County Council and the County Executive, the Food Council began work on the significant task of creating a Food Action Plan, which involves conducting a thorough assessment of the current state of food system work and establishing a long-term strategy for addressing existing issues and gaps in effort. This plan will serve as a tool for identifying opportunities and understanding how those opportunities can be implemented in policy and practice. It will identify goals, ultimate strategies for achieving these goals, necessary changes, actions to take, and metrics to gauge success. This effort will build upon the findings of our Montgomery County Community Food Access Report, released in October 2015, a three year research effort that identified six communities of low food access as well as the primary challenges to food access in our County, including transportation, income inequality, language barriers, and a lack of culturally appropriate foods. Also, our comprehensive assessment of all emergency food and food literacy resource providers in our County is already underway, an essential first step in the creation of a plan to address Food Insecurity. And, our Food Hub study, funded with generous support from the County Council in FY16, is about to be released with significant insight into the economic opportunities available to increase food production and access in our County.

The Food Council is tremendously appreciative of the support and attention to this issue. We also commend the County's past and current significant commitment to mitigating food insecurity and other food system issues, and echo the importance of deploying these resources strategically, with a comprehensive vision in mind. The Food Council looks forward to working with our partners to strengthen the tremendous existing food access work in Montgomery County, and to the opportunity to incorporate these diverse, experienced perspectives to develop a comprehensive and implementable strategy for achieving our common goal of food security for all in Montgomery County.



Heather Bruskin  
Manager  
Montgomery County Food Council

**Testimony of Andy Burness, President, Burness; and Chair, Montgomery County Food Security Collaborative in support of Bill 19-16, Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity**

**June 14, 2016**

I am Andy Burness, Chair of the Montgomery County Food Security Collaborative, a group of organizations encouraging collaborative solutions to significantly reduce hunger in our county by 2020. For the last 30 years, I have led a local business in Bethesda. Our clients are local, national and global, and many are involved in the fight against hunger.

Two years ago, I joined with a group of volunteers to go on a “food recovery” – working through the wonderful Food Recovery Network at the University of Maryland. That night, we filled perhaps 25 large plastic bins of food and delivered them to a women’s shelter. When we got there, we found to our amazement that six bins filled with food from a previous drop-off were sitting on the kitchen counter, uneaten. We didn’t know what to do. How can you bring fresh, delicious food to a shelter and then take it back? But, conversely, how can you leave that food for the women in the shelter, knowing that most of it will go to waste and others who need that food won’t get it?

I was once again reminded of a life lesson that evening –namely that doing good in and of itself is not guaranteed to help the people we’re all trying to help. And that data is critical to tackling issues related to poverty, because if you don’t know who is hungry, it’s impossible to target the people with the greatest need.

System reform is not terribly sexy, but in the end, systems are necessary for solving our big problems. Nobody cheers at the prospect of collaboration, but Individual acts of generosity, disconnected from a larger plan, help a child or a veteran or a shut-in, but they don’t solve the bigger problem of hunger.

That’s why I enthusiastically support today’s legislation. It’s about system reform.

It calls on the County to develop a plan and insists that all people with an interest in or responsibility for solving hunger step up and coordinate efforts.

It says that data rules, that we need to know who is hungry, how many are hungry, and where they live. It holds the County accountable with real metrics – reducing food insecurity by 10 per cent each year, starting in 2017.

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## Advancing Social Change Worldwide

burness

It requires strange bedfellows who may hardly know each other to be problem solvers together – food assistance groups, anti-poverty advocates, school leaders, county planners, transportation experts, information technology experts, caterers, public health officials. And restaurants, hospitals, grocery stores, colleges and universities, where unused food is too often wasted, are critical as well.

It says that any solution that is developed in isolation is not a solution that will ultimately reduce the ranks of hungry people in Montgomery County.

This legislation is government at its best – involving all people working on one part of the elephant to come together to create a plan and then deliver on it. It won't solve poverty, the real villain in this story. But it will take our fight against hunger to a new moral ground, with insistence that we do our best to reduce the number of hungry neighbors – starting with a plan.

Basic food security for all of our neighbors is a challenge we are clearly up to. Thank you for your leadership and your insistence on results.



**Strategic Plan to End Food Insecurity Testimony  
Wednesday, June 14, 2016**

Council President Floreen and Councilmembers,

Thank you for the opportunity to share Nonprofit Montgomery's support of Bill 19-16, which will create a strategic plan to address hunger and food insecurity.

First, thank you to Councilmember Berliner for his sponsorship of this Bill, and Councilmembers Leventhal and Rice for their co-sponsorship.

Nonprofit Montgomery is an alliance of 126 nonprofit organizations serving Montgomery County residents. While our day-to-day work strengthens leadership in the nonprofit sector through leadership development, peer-to-peer networking, and strategic partnerships, the overarching reason for the work we do is that strong nonprofits contribute to a thriving, just, and fair Montgomery County.

Hunger and food insecurity are issues that are central to a just and fair society. More than ten of Nonprofit Montgomery's 126 members are directly involved in hunger relief programs, including most of those who are offering testimony today, and many more of our members partner with hunger-relief organizations to serve clients they see for intersecting issues like housing, health care, mental health care, job training, legal services, and after-school programs, all of which relate to poverty and economic opportunity.

This legislation calls for the Chief Innovation Officer to consult with cross-sector leaders and organizations, including Manna Food Center and the Montgomery County Food Council, both members of Nonprofit Montgomery. We applaud this, and also support consultation with many other nonprofit, community-based, and faith-based organizations of all sizes, budgets, and focuses, especially those that are grassroots organizations serving our most vulnerable communities. Diverse voices across multiple sectors are important to solve our most pressing problems.

We urge that they be fully included in this planning process, and that once the planning process concludes, we encourage their inclusion as full partners for implementation. For this plan to succeed, it must be owned by ALL of its participants.

This will, of course, take resources. A coordinated system to address a large issue like this requires a common agenda, shared measurement, continuous communication, data collection, consistent outcomes evaluation, and much more. Many of our small, and even some of our large organizations struggle with capacity to collect data, measure outcomes, and communicate success because their resources are devoted to direct service. We must ensure that the investment of resources called for when this plan is released includes resources to support full participation in a collective effort.

Addressing food insecurity and hunger is only one part of a much larger charge that we as a county must address...the growing economic opportunity gap and the reality of poverty. I hope that the framework being used to develop, and eventually implement this Strategic Plan will be a model for similar frameworks to significantly reduce poverty in the county, and look forward to supporting those into the future.

Brigid Nuta Howe  
Executive Director  
Nonprofit Montgomery  
[www.nonprofitmoco.org](http://www.nonprofitmoco.org)  
[brigid@nonprofitmoco.org](mailto:brigid@nonprofitmoco.org)

Testimony: Brett Meyers

June 14, 2016

My name is Brett Meyers and I am the Founder and Executive Director of Nourish Now. Nourish Now is a food recovery based organization located in Rockville, Maryland.

When I was 18 years old I moved out of my home which fortunately I never had to worry about food. That was true until I was a college student trying to live off of \$75 a week. I experienced what it was like to not have food in my refrigerator and much worse not having the money to fill it up.

Fortunately for me the moments of food insecurity I faced were brief, but I never forgot them. Everyone faces ups and downs in their lives, whether you live in a mansion or experiencing homelessness, but food is the one thing we all cannot live without.

Unfortunately, 77,780 people suffer from food insecurity in Montgomery County. That is enough people to fill a football stadium to its capacity. Enough fresh food is wasted each day to also fill a football stadium to its capacity. How can one of the wealthiest counties in the nation have this many people in need of the most basic thing we all need to survive. All of us have a goal to thrive in our lives, to make the best of what's around, and with all the obstacles that can get in the way, it is very hard to imagine adding hunger while trying to pursue my life's dreams.

One of the reasons I created Nourish Now was to do everything I could to help people in need not experience hunger.

After 5 years of operations, my organization Nourish Now is doing everything we possibly can to help solve this issue. Nourish Now recovers over 25,000 pounds of food that would otherwise be wasted each month. Every family we donate to receives restaurant quality food from our 130 food donor partners. We give food donations to over 50 County agencies to help support their food budgets. In 2015, Nourish Now saved out partner organizations over \$150,000 in food costs. Nourish Now also provides food donations to over 500 families in need monthly. Collaboration began with our first food donation five years ago and I am excited about the possibilities of collaboration this bill could bring. I hope the planning and the execution of this major endeavor will focus on the strengths each organization can bring and together we will make a positive change to our County as it relates to ending food insecurity. I hope Nourish Now will be asked to be a part of this Countywide plan. All of us at Nourish Now are looking forward to playing as large a role as possible in this effort. Please feel free to reach out to us anytime and thank you for this opportunity to speak today.



# Shepherd's Table

TOGETHER MEETING NEEDS. CHANGING LIVES.

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## Public Testimony for Bill 19 - 16

President Floreen, Vice President Berliner, and members of the County Council, my name is Jacki Coyle and I am the Executive Director of Shepherd's Table, an organization committed to meeting the basic human needs of men and women experiencing homelessness and poverty in Silver Spring and Montgomery County. I am also a member of the Food Access and Recovery Group of the Montgomery County Food Council. Shepherd's Table is very proud to be a part of Community Food Rescue. I am proud to have served as Chair of the County Council working group on Food Recovery, which gave birth to a more coordinated and effective effort to recover food: Community Food Rescue.

Shepherd's Table has been meeting the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness and poverty for 33 years. We have served thousands of hungry people serving over 1.5 million meals. We are honored to be part of this public hearing. I would like to thank especially Council Member Berliner for his sponsoring of BILL # 19 - 16 and his co-sponsors on the HHS Committee, Council Member Leventhal and Council Member Rice. Your passion to meet the needs of all in our County, especially the most vulnerable, is a testament to the heart and soul of the County Council!

As we prepare to move into our new building in December of this year, I thank each Council member for your vision and commitment to ensure that essential and life giving services are provided in Silver Spring to women and men experiencing poverty and homelessness. The new building gives Shepherd's Table the opportunity to double its impact in the community by doubling the number of meals we serve each week!

As the draft legislation states, estimates suggest as many as 78,000 of our neighbors do not always know where their next meal is coming from in this great County. In the first 5 months of this year, Shepherd's Table has served over 1,008 unduplicated

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**Community 1st**  
Greater Washington, DC



persons and over 22,000 meals. The number of new people coming to us in this same time period is 333. While many of our meal guests are homeless, 8 % are housed but are living in poverty. Another 27% live with family or friends in very vulnerable situations. Each day, they must decide how they will pay living expenses, how they will buy food, and if they will be able to maintain their housing. Many of this group are senior citizens. Our clients are as diverse, as is this County—11% identify as White, 55% as African American, and 4% as Asian. 37% of our clients are Hispanic or Latino. 85% of the people we serve are men and 15% are women. All who seek services; especially meals, are people experiencing food insecurity. All are HUNGRY!

How will we end hunger in Montgomery County?

Just as your legislation states, the plan to end hunger must be one that is a collaborative effort, with County government, nonprofits, schools, businesses, organizations, individuals all working together to simply diminish food insecurity but to ensure that EVERYONE is FOOD SECURE.

Currently, Shepherd's Table works in partnership with the County and many other organizations, businesses and individuals. Because of this, we are able to ensure that all who walk through our door, an average of 140 people per day, are provided a nutritious meal. The results of our strong partnerships ensure that not only are people fed a nutritious meal, but because of these meals they are able to maintain or improve their health and also are able to take the necessary steps to improve their lives.

We regularly work hand in hand with Manna, the Capital Area Food Bank, Community Food Rescue, Interfaith Works, Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless, over 35 faith communities, 3 Farmer's Markets, over 15 businesses and countless other organizations and individuals.

Each year, over 135,000 pounds of recovered food finds its way into our extraordinarily delicious and nutritious meals which are served to our dinner and brunch guests.

Through the generosity of Maryland Emergency Food Program grants, other Foundation grants, as well as business and individual donations, we are able to purchase much-needed food to supplement the food that is donated.

Local businesses or groups provide what we call a BRIGHT Meal throughout the year. This is an opportunity for the business to choose special food for the dinner or

brunch meal, pay for the food, and provide volunteers to serve the meal. These BRIGHT meals give our meal guests a special meal, just like those all of us enjoy when we go out to dinner or brunch.

Shepherd's Table is poised to experience the most important time in our 33 year history. With the move into the new Progress Place in December of this year, we will double the amount of meals serve as we become the sole provider of meals. We will go from providing 9 meals to 19 meals each week. We anticipate serving over 100,000 meals in 2017. We will double our impact on the lives of those we serve and double our impact in the community! Many more people will be fed. Fewer people will be hungry. We will continue to play our part in making this County one that is food secure for all.

While we are most proud that we serve all who walk through our doors a nutritious meal, we know that hunger and food insecurity remain in Montgomery County. We support the creation of a strategic plan to address and ultimately eliminate food insecurity in our County.

We, along with Manna and other providers suggest a change in the name of the legislation. Make the bill about Food Security for ALL. The definition of food security by the World Health organization states: "...all people at all times [will] have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life"

We believe that seeking to simply reduce food insecurity by 10% a year falls short of the vision needed to end food insecurity and to ensure FOOD SECURITY for ALL. Be BOLD in your vision and confidant in your belief that working together we can ensure food security for all.

We believe that learning lessons and gleaning knowledge from national and global efforts in ending hunger and ensuring food security will allow us to move more efficiently. Every day that people in this County and throughout our world experience hunger is a bad day for all of us!

We are proud to be a part of Montgomery County, a County that has stood at the forefront of change that significantly bettered people's lives. Just recently working and succeeding at ending Veteran Homelessness proved that a passionate, committed County in collaboration with equally committed organizations and stakeholders could effect change. Together we can end food insecurity and bring Food Security to all.

We support this legislation, knowing that it not only continues the commitment of the

Council to significantly care for the lives of all its citizens but also that it is a Bold initiative to do what is seemingly impossible, to ensure FOOD SECURITY for all. It continues to bring together the best minds, the biggest hearts, and the best practices nationally and globally to end HUNGER.

Shepherd's Table is ready to work in partnership with the County, other agencies, and the many businesses and individuals who will be needed to ensure Food Security for everyone!

*Jashi Coyle 6/9/16*

**Testimony for Bill 19-16**  
**From Women Who Care Ministries**  
**Presented by: Judith Clark, Executive Director**  
**June 14, 2016**

I am Judie Clark, Executive Director of Women Who Care Ministries and we are happy to give testimony today, in support of Bill 19-16.

For over 15 years we have had the privilege of providing safety net services to vulnerable members of our community in Montgomery County.

One of the primary services we provide is food, through our Montgomery Village Food Center and through our Helping Kids Eat Weekend Meal Program. Although both of these programs are flourishing, still there are too many families and children going to bed hungry. That's why we're excited about this Bill.

Needless to say, the issue of food insecurity is of great concern to us. Through providing weekend meals to children in both elementary and middle school, our awareness to hunger and its underlying causes has increased tremendously in the past decade. There are so many other family issues at hand that lead to child hunger, and to household food insecurity that we are hoping this bill will address.

I'm talking about Issues such as incarceration, unemployment, domestic violence, lack of knowledge of County resources, lack of knowledge of process to tap into these resources, overcoming pride, and many other hindering forces.

Therefore, we are looking forward to this bill being comprehensive, wherein, although the primary focus is to end hunger and food insecurity, the overlapping ancillary factors are taken into great consideration as well. After all, a chain is only as strong as it's weakest link.

As food providers we realize we can do a lot of work with seeing to it that meals get into the hands of our clients, but if we are not exploring the root causes of their hunger, in a solution-focused manner, we are just putting a band aid on the problem consequently the problem, hunger and food insecurity never goes away. Matter of fact, often times feelings of deprivation cause our clients to over indulge in food because they are still very fearful of where their next meal will come from.

We are hopeful this bill will address how we can work with other agencies to alleviate the psychologic barriers that bar our clients from embracing the concept of being able to live a life free from food insecurity, even in their low income state.

In summary, we would like to see these aspects being implemented through the bill:

- 1) Thorough research and review of best practices from other counties and states, to be complemented by what we are already doing well.
- 2) We would like this bill to offer increased focus of non-participation of eligible families in the SNAP program, and getting to the root cause of why. Most often it's because it is difficult for them to fill out the form or go online to register themselves. A couple of months ago a new client apprised us she had been denied food stamps and temporary cash assistance. The reason was because she had lost her birth certificate and didn't have the funds to order another one. We ordered it for her that same day and a couple of weeks later she was receiving over \$500 month combined SNAP and cash assistance.

- 3) **Emphasis on client participation and responsibility. We would like to see the Bill implement systems designed to allow the consciousness of the recipients to make a dramatic switch from what we as providers can do for them to what part can they play to help themselves reach self-sufficiency. This includes offering financial literacy/management skills classes; which includes budgeting their resources. Incentives for these classes; a certificate – a gift card, will go a long way and will greatly reduce food insecurity. Through our experience, our clients who submit to increasing their financial management skills are less likely to be food insecure, conditional on other factors. This also reduces the feelings of entitlement many of our clients have. This includes encouraging those who are employable to get a part time job, to the point that it does not affect their monthly benefits, etc. Most of our clients don't want a hand out, but a hand up. They want to be self-sufficient and not depend on the assistance more than necessary.**
  
- 4) **Also, although SNAP and WIC are among the primary programs implemented to aid food insecurity, we are hopeful that this bill will not overlook that thousands of food insecure residents are ineligible for SNAP. This is why our food banks are so critical, as they are the only source of food assistance to the households that are ineligible for SNAP and other federal food assistance programs.**

Women Who Care Ministries' goal is to put ourselves out of a job through this fierce fight to end hunger, so we can then go about focusing on some of the many other issues of our vulnerable residents that we can help heal.

Women Who Care Ministries looks forward to the passing of this Bill, and collaborating and strategizing with our community partners in playing a vital role in the shaping, molding and effectiveness of it.

Thank you for your time.