



2019 Legislative Priorities

Provide Funds for Fruit & Vegetable Programs for SNAP and WIC Households

Fresh Bucks and the Farmers Market Nutrition Program make fruits and vegetables more affordable for SNAP and WIC participants by providing additional benefits. For 4 years, health clinics, farmers markets, and grocery stores across our state have collaborated on a federal pilot (Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentives, or FINI) to expand access to fresh produce for low-income people. State funds will enable thousands of low-income families to continue to purchase healthy food, fight hunger, and improve health.

Eliminate School Lunch Co-Pay to Ensure Access to Nutrition for Low-Income Students

Kids do better in school when they don't have to worry whether they can afford meals. Some families struggle even to pay the cost of a reduced-price lunch. By eliminating the co-pay for all students (pre-K – 12th grade) and increasing the number of schools using Community Eligibility (more students receive free meals), low-income kids can focus on learning, instead of whether they'll be hungry at lunchtime.

Help Schools Provide Adequate Time for Lunch for All Students

Kids need enough time to get and eat their lunch so they can feel focused and healthy all day at school. Unfortunately, some students get as little as 15 minutes for lunch period, and they miss out on a balanced meal. School districts should have support, model language, and technical assistance to develop local policies that will ensure their students have adequate time for lunch each day.

Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights

Adjustments to last year's bill will continue to ensure kids don't face humiliation and have access to a healthy meal when families are struggling, while giving schools more tools to feed kids. Schools and OSPI would work together to enroll more low-income students in subsidized school meals and enroll schools in options like Community Eligibility, which limits expenses for struggling families *and* for schools.

Invest in Sustainability of WSDA's Farm to School Program & Farm to Food Pantry Program

Connecting farmers to local schools, food pantries, and other local buyers makes Washington's communities healthier while making Washington's farms more successful. WSDA's nationally-recognized Farm to School program and its growing Farm to Food Pantry pilot provide valuable resources for our agriculture sector as well as schools and anti-hunger organizations. Stabilizing current investments allows WSDA to sustain their capacity to meet increasing demand from schools, food pantries, *and* farmers to help farm businesses connect with local programs that help students and low-income people eat healthy and be healthy.

For more information, contact:

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Anti-Poverty Legislative Priorities

Reform TANF to Help Families with Children Living in Deep Poverty

Remove punitive TANF policies that penalize families living in deep poverty and make it harder for them to enroll in and succeed with TANF. Allowing families who play by the rules to qualify for hardship extensions to time limits, and reorienting policies to encourage compliance, means more families can use TANF and workforce services to get and stay on a path out of deep poverty and on to economic stability.

Improve Protections for Renters to Reduce Housing Instability and Homelessness

Food insecurity and housing insecurity are tightly linked, so creating protections for renters by reforming the eviction process is critical. Currently, landlords can begin the eviction process for non-payment of rent after only 3 days. Giving renters more time allows more families to stay in their homes and avoid an expensive eviction process. Additionally, landlords only need to give tenants only 20 days' notice to move for just cause terminations. Giving tenants more notice allows families to find new homes instead of becoming homeless.

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

HEN provides critical rental, utility, and transportation assistance to people with significant physical and mental disabilities who are unable to work and often struggle with hunger. A significant increase in HEN funding would ensure that all eligible clients could be served, eliminating the program's existing waiting lists.

Adapt TANF and Working Connections to Help Teen Parents Complete High School

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

Our Ongoing Commitment

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

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

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

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

ANTI-HUNGER & NUTRITION COALITION STEERING COMMITTEE:

Faith Action Network – Food Lifeline – Northwest Harvest - Nutrition First – United Way of King Co. – WA Food Coalition – WA State Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics - WA State Farmers Market Assoc. – Young Farmers Coalition