



## 2019 Legislative Priorities

Feeding Kentucky (formerly Kentucky Association of Food Banks), a Partner State Association of Feeding America, is Kentucky's largest charitable response to hunger. Our network of 7 regional food banks and over 800 community agencies work together in successful public/private partnerships to assist 1 in 7 Kentuckians a year. Feeding Kentucky members distributed 76.6 million pounds of food in FY 18, or the equivalent of 64 million meals.

We depend upon strong federal nutrition programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), child nutrition programs such as Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and federal commodity foods through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). SNAP alone provides twelve times the meals enabled through the Feeding America food bank network, underscoring the significant role it plays in connecting families with meals nationwide. Food banks also need strong charitable giving incentives to invest in a robust nonprofit sector that continues to enrich communities and provide vital services. Innovative state programs that strengthen Kentucky's agricultural economy while providing food to our most vulnerable neighbors are key to the fight to end hunger in Kentucky.

Feeding Kentucky urges Congress and the Kentucky General Assembly to partner with us to create programs that help increase opportunity among the neighbors we serve and that maintain the longstanding bipartisan commitment to protect anti-hunger programs from budget cuts and harmful policy changes.

### **Federal Policy Initiatives**

- **Ensure the Federal Budget Protects Federal Nutrition Programs**  
Federal nutrition programs are the essential foundation for low-income Americans to get the nutritious foods needed when they fall on hard times. Congress must protect SNAP and other critical programs like TEFAP, CSFP, and child nutrition programs to ensure they remain a resource for millions of Americans in need of food assistance, and should:
  - **Oppose structural changes to SNAP.** SNAP lifts millions of families out of poverty, alleviates food insecurity, and has a proven cost-effective impact on the health and well-being of our most vulnerable. Proposals to block grant or make structural changes to the program would prevent it from responding effectively to fluctuations in need, and efforts to limit broad-based categorical eligibility would increase administrative costs and access barriers.
  - **Oppose efforts to cut nutrition programs like SNAP and TEFAP.**

- **Protect charitable giving incentives** in any tax reform language included in a budget resolution and support modifications to tax reform law that remedy the impact on charitable giving.
- **Reduce Hunger Through Federal Spending Legislation**
  - **FY2020 appropriations legislation should support strong funding for TEFAP**, including providing full funding for TEFAP food purchases at \$350 million a year, and \$100 million for TEFAP storage and distribution funds to support the infrastructure and distribution capacity necessary to meet need.
  - **FY2020 appropriations legislation should provide an increase beyond the current \$236 million in funding for CSFP** which provides monthly nutritious food packages to 619,000 low-income seniors. More funding is needed to meet the needs of seniors struggling with hunger. Congress should also provide additional funds to serve any new states with USDA-approved plans.
  - **FY2020 appropriations legislation should support the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) funding** to expand the reach of the program to children who aren't able to access a summer feeding site.
  - **FY2020 appropriations legislation should provide sufficient funding for the Older Americans Act's home-delivered and congregate meals programs.**
- **Protect and Strengthen Child Nutrition Programs**

The federal child nutrition programs are an essential investment in the one in five children in Kentucky who face hunger. Ensuring all children have the nutritious food they need to learn, grow, and thrive is critical to our nation's future. In addition to protecting SNAP, Congress should help maintain strong nutrition standards and efficient access to all child nutrition programs.

  - Congress should **protect the funding and structure of child nutrition programs** in budget and spending legislation.
  - We urge USDA to **ensure that regulations on child nutrition programs protect and increase access** for the millions of children who rely on the programs for nutritious food.
- **Strengthen the Nonprofit Community in Tax Policy**

Tax policy plays a key role in the fight against hunger and helps reduce food waste. Food banks rely on support from a variety of sources, including individual and corporate giving, government commodities, and donations from all segments of the food industry.

  - **Protect and strengthen the charitable tax deduction** to ensure the ability of our network to raise needed funds and supplement vital federal programs.
  - **Protect and strengthen food donation tax incentives** which play a powerful role in connecting excess nutritious food with people in need.

Without these tax incentives, it would cost growers, retailers, and food companies more to donate food than it would to put it in a landfill.

- **Ensure a fair, accurate and complete 2020 U.S. Census.** The U.S. Constitution mandates that the population of the United States be counted every ten years. The data collected determine the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives and how hundreds of billions of federal dollars are allocated for key programs such as SNAP, the National School Lunch program and Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). If the data are wrong, there will be inequitable distribution of resources for basic community needs such as food and income security. We must ensure a fair and accurate count so that resources are directed to where they are most needed.
- **Protect the advocacy rights of nonprofit organizations.** The integrity of food banks and other nonprofits must be preserved by protecting the tax-law ban on electioneering and partisan political activities. We oppose any changes to the provision of federal tax law that protects food banks, other nonprofits, houses of worship, and foundations from demands from politicians and others for endorsements and support.

### **State Policy Initiatives**

Feeding Kentucky supports efforts to increase the availability of nutrient-dense locally grown food to low-income Kentuckians through the Farms to Food Banks program. The current state income tax credit for farmers who donate to nonprofit feeding programs “sunsetting” in taxable year 2017. Feeding Kentucky supports the **extension of the tax credit** and an increase in the amount of credit from 10 percent to 20 percent. Feeding Kentucky supports state funding appropriated for **value added processing** to benefit food banks.

Feeding Kentucky urges the General Assembly to **reject proposals to alter core policy components** of the SNAP program such as requiring applicants be drug tested to receive benefits. We oppose efforts to enact even stricter work requirements that make it harder for vulnerable Kentuckians to access food assistance.

Feeding Kentucky supports efforts to **establish a state earned income tax credit**. The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a tax credit for low- and moderate-income working families that is designed to help people afford to work by offsetting the rising costs of child care, transportation, and utilities that working families need. The federal EITC reduces poverty and enhances opportunity for low- to moderate-income families through a tax credit that supplements low wages. By enacting a refundable EITC at 15 percent of the federal credit, Kentucky could join 29 other states and D.C. that build on the successes of the federal credit — which evidence shows has lasting benefits for children including improved long-term health, educational and employment outcomes.

We support efforts to maintain and – where appropriate – **expand nonprofit exemptions** from paying state and local property, sales and use taxes and from collecting sales and use taxes.

We promote and support tax policy that empowers community solutions through nonprofits, such as a **statutory exemption for nonprofits from collecting sales and use tax** on admissions and on any other related fundraising activities.

We **oppose efforts to place a cap on itemized charitable deductions** in an attempt to increase state revenue and balance the state budget.