

## Communities Support State Food Assistance

*62 community organizations join together to call for restoration of State Food Assistance for our children, elders, and families.*

*February 19, 2013*

Dear Esteemed Washington State Legislators and Governor Inslee,

We are coming together from all around Washington State, from diverse communities, to call on you to restore State Food Assistance to equal benefit levels with Basic Food.

State Food Assistance is Washington's smart answer to hunger. For more than 15 years, Washington has strategically leveraged national resources to make sure that food stamps reach families in need.

But now our food security network isn't working like it should. During the recession, Washington legislators slashed State Food Assistance benefits for thousands of children growing up in immigrant families, nearly all of whom are children of color. At a time when an estimated one in four Washington children live in food insecure households, the cut to State Food Assistance deepens racial and economic inequality.

The cut to State Food Assistance (SFA) hurts vulnerable children and elders the most. Children make up half of the Washingtonians in households that receive State Food Assistance. Many are seniors. Singling out immigrant children and elders to suffer in hard times is simply not fair.

Our quality of life in Washington depends on our ability to make sure kids have what they need to grow up healthy and strong. No matter where you're from, or what you look like, in America all of our children should have opportunities to learn and succeed so they can grow up and be the strong leaders, workers and parents our future depends on.

But hunger is a roadblock to opportunity. Hungry children can't learn. The ties between hunger, poor health and learning are well understood. If we continue to send children to school without the fuel they need for academic success, we continue to let the opportunity gap swallow up our future.

In our communities we see the impact of the cut. Families are telling us that with the cut in SFA, they can't get even the basics of what they need. They are forced to cut back on food so that they can keep the rent paid and have transportation to work.

Cash-strapped families are skimping on the grocery items that build our kids' bodies and minds and keep elders healthy: items like fish, dairy, veggies and whole grains. Visits to food banks can't fill the holes left in family budgets by the cut, and food banks in many of our communities are overwhelmed by the rising need.

This legislative session we urge you to restore the integrity of our food security system, and restore State Food Assistance to equal benefits with Basic Food. It is a move in the right direction for Washington State.

- *Signatories listed on reverse.*

Anti-Hunger and Nutrition Coalition (statewide)  
 API CHAYA (King County)  
 Asian Counseling and Referral Service (King County)  
 Auburn Food Bank  
 Auburn Youth Resources  
 Ballard Food Bank  
 Bothell Community Kitchen  
 Casa Latina (King County)  
 Children's Alliance (statewide)  
 Des Moines Area Food Bank  
 Eastside Human Services Forum (East King County)  
 Ethiopian Community Mutual Association (King County)  
 El Centro de la Raza (King County)  
 El Comité Pro-Reforma Migratoria y Justicia Social (King County, Pierce County)  
 Emergency Feeding Program of Seattle & King County  
 Faith Action Network (statewide)  
 First Congregational United Church of Christ, Vancouver, Washington  
 FISH Food Banks of Pierce County  
 Food bank at St. Mary's (Seattle)  
 Food Lifeline (statewide)  
 Hopelink (North and East King County)  
 Hunger Intervention Program (Seattle)  
 International Community Health Services (King County)  
 Jewish Federation of Seattle  
 Legal Voice (statewide)  
 Lifelong AIDS Alliance (King County)  
 Lourdes Salazar, President, and Diana Lindner, MD, FAAP, of Eastside Latino Leadership Forum (East King County)  
 Maple Valley Food Bank  
 Michael Woo and Tammy Nguyen of Got Green (King County)  
 Minority Executive Directors Coalition of King

County  
 Multi-Service Center - Federal Way  
 National Association of Social Workers - WA Chapter  
 Northwest Harvest (statewide)  
 Nutrition First (statewide)  
 Odyssey World International (Spokane)  
 One America (statewide)  
 Seattle Food Committee  
 Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness (SKCCH)  
 Senior Services (King County)  
 Solid Ground (King County)  
 South King County Food Coalition  
 Spokane Valley Partners  
 St. Leo Food Connection (Tacoma)  
 Statewide Poverty Action Network  
 Tacoma Community House  
 Tenino Food Bank  
 United Way of King County  
 United Way of Snohomish County  
 University District Food Bank (Seattle)  
 Vashon Maury Community Food Bank  
 Vietnamese Friendship Association  
 Washington State Community Action Partnership  
 Washington State CAN  
 Washington Food Coalition  
 Washington State Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
 Washington State Catholic Conference  
 Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
 Washington State Food and Nutrition Council  
 West Seattle Food Bank  
 White Center Community Development Association  
 White Center Food Bank  
 Within Reach (statewide)

*For further information about State Food Assistance, contact Linda Stone, Food Policy Director, Children's Alliance at [linda@childrensalliance.org](mailto:linda@childrensalliance.org) or (509) 844-1314.*