



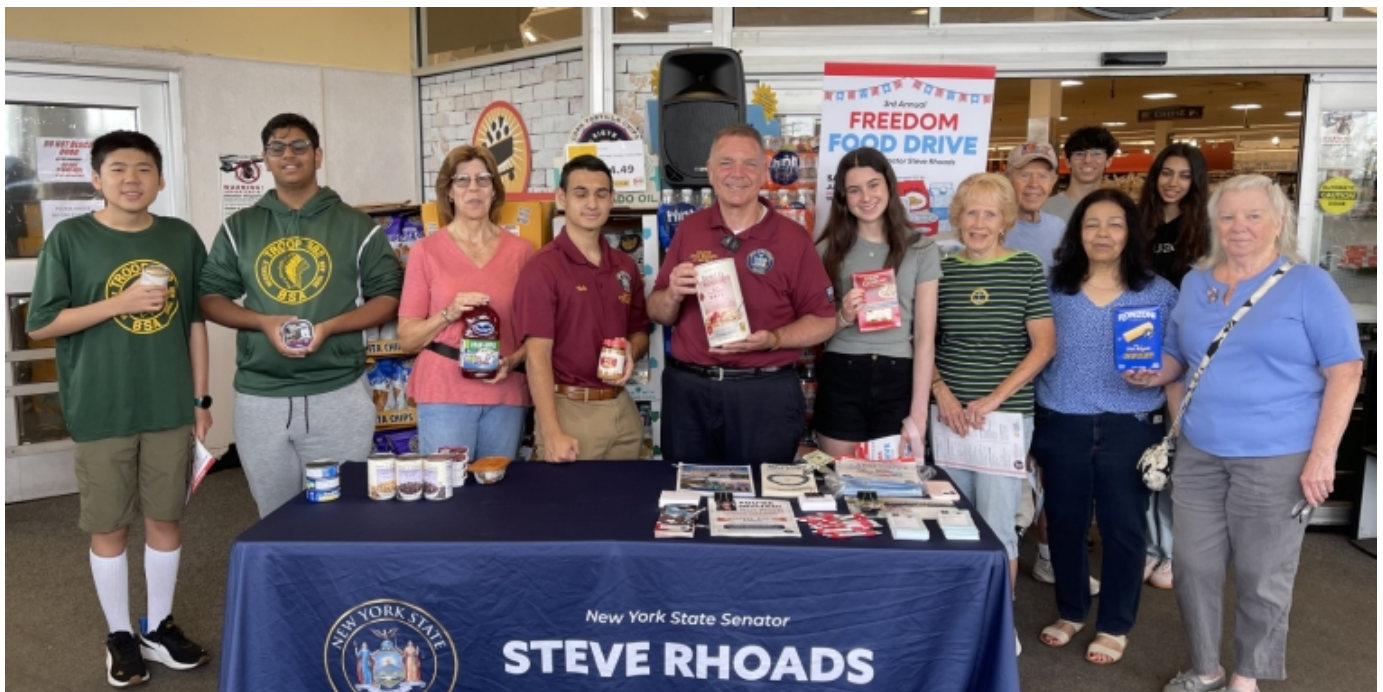
NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Steven D. Rhoads

Senator Steve Rhoads' 3rd Annual Freedom Food Drive Collects Over 800 Pounds of Food for Local Families in Need

STEVEN D. RHOADS July 17, 2025

| ISSUE: **FOOD INSECURITY, FOOD DRIVE**



Bethpage, NY — Ahead of Independence Day, Senator Steve Rhoads brought the community together for his **3rd Annual Freedom Food Drive**, collecting **over 800 pounds of food** to benefit the Food Pantry at Our Lady of Mercy in Hicksville. The event was held on Saturday, June 28, outside the ShopRite on Hempstead Turnpike and drew dozens of volunteers, including local Scout troops, civic groups, and generous residents.

“This event is about more than just food—it’s about freedom, community, and compassion,” **said Senator Steve Rhoads**. “As we celebrate our independence, we also recognize the importance of looking out for one another. I’m incredibly proud of our community for showing up, giving back, and helping ensure no family goes hungry this summer.”

The food drive was hosted in partnership with **Island Harvest**, one of Long Island’s largest hunger-relief organizations, which helped coordinate the donation logistics.

“Senator Steve Rhoads has been a champion in the fight against hunger on Long Island and across New York State,” **said Randi Shubin Dresner, President & CEO of Island Harvest Food Bank**. “Senator Rhoads’ ‘Freedom Food Drive,’ held annually around Independence Day is one of the highlight food drive events of the summer and we thank him and his staff for their continuous support.”

The food collected will go directly to the shelves of the **Our Lady of Mercy Food Pantry**, which serves hundreds of local families each month.

“Food is one of the few things that has the power to bring people together, it is more than just sustenance, it’s Hope and Love. Our Lady of Mercy Food Pantry’s shelves overflow with the over 800 pounds of food collected during the Senator Rhoads Freedom Food Drive at the Bethpage ShopRite. The Senator’s dynamic team of interns, volunteers, and very generous community who purchased just one or two additional items for donation made a difference in the lives of our neighbors this summer. On behalf of our neighbors in need, thank you!,” **said Genny Feliciano with Our Lady of Mercy Parish Services**. “

Senator Rhoads plans to continue the Freedom Food Drive tradition annually, encouraging more residents to take part in giving back during the season of patriotism and unity.