



WEST SIDE  
CAMPAIGN AGAINST HUNGER

---

Dear Senators and Assemblymembers of the Joint hearing on Ag and Markets/Parks and Recreation,

My name is Chef Gregory Silverman and I am writing you on behalf of my organization, The West Side Campaign Against Hunger, to ask for your support in addressing food and nutrition insecurity in New York State in the upcoming budget. Specifically, we are asking for your support in ensuring that the Hunger Prevention Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP) is funded at \$75 million, Nourish New York is funded at \$75 million, and that you work to expand upon the 40-yearlong precedent of directly supporting food pantries, food rescues, meals programs, in addition to food banks with any increases to these programs.

The West Side Campaign Against Hunger's mission is to make sure all New Yorkers have access with dignity to a choice of healthy food and supportive services.

New York State is experiencing an increase in food insecurity. This year the USDA ERS report released that 1 in 8 New York households are experiencing food insecurity. That is an increase from 1 in 10 in the year prior.

In conjunction with the dramatic 25% rise of food inflation from 2019, the pressure on direct providers to meet these needs is immense. Not only is it more expensive for families to shop at the grocery store, it's more expensive to keep pantry shelves stocked with healthy, nutritious food.

My team of 30 staff and over 2,000 volunteers is working day in and day out, no matter how cold it is outside, serving families across Bronx, Kings, New York, and Queens counties, that join our growing lines. This past year alone we served over 110,000 New Yorkers in need at over 30 community distribution points and via over 2,000 home based deliveries each month. No matter the need, we stay focused on our community, making sure they have access to healthy, culturally relevant foods. We will give out over 2.5 million pounds of fresh produce this year. We've never seen numbers like this.

We buy the best product possible, and we can only do that when we have the funds to do so.

We've never run out of food, and we never will run out of food. Part of that is thanks to the support from the state. Getting HPNAP and Nourish NY directly allows us to buy amazing New York State products, culturally relevant, healthy, and fresh food that our customers want and need.

**Food pantries need direct support** to provide culturally appropriate, nutritious food with proper staffing and operations. Putting the funding directly into local communities' better addresses needs and builds a stronger, more reliable food supply chain. Beyond running the West Side Campaign Against Hunger, I helped found The Roundtable: Allies for Food Access here in NYC. This network of 9 of the most innovative front line anti hunger organizations uses our collective efforts to purchase food as a network

---

263 West 86th St • New York, NY 10024 • 212-362-3662 • [info@wscah.org](mailto:info@wscah.org)

 [www.wscah.org](http://www.wscah.org)  [/wscah](https://www.facebook.com/wscah)  [@wscah](https://twitter.com/wscah)  [@wscah\\_](https://www.instagram.com/wscah)

**DIGNITY. COMMUNITY. CHOICE.**

to drive down prices, shares innovative practice and truly support one another so we can support our customers across NYC. Collectively we served 69 million meals last year, distributed 33 million pounds of produce, across 882 distribution points and through working together we saved over \$200,000 in bulk purchasing as a collective. Collaboration works and we can only do this if we have the direct dollars to directly purchase healthy food for our community.

Frontline providers, like the West Side Campaign Against Hunger, work directly, day in and day out with our community. No matter the circumstance, we find a way to support our community. From transforming efforts during pandemic to make sure customers could more safely stay in their homes or neighborhoods instead of long travels to reach pantries, to working with food insecure medically fragile seniors and new moms we have innovated to bring more food directly to customers homes. We live in a changing world, the emergency feeding sector must change as well, and we are here to help test, innovate, and transform our work to best honor the dignity and needs of all our community. We know what we need to feed our friends and neighbors and across the front lines, direct service focused emergency feeding organizations need to see increases to HPNAP and Nourish NY and we need to see that increase directly distributed to the frontlines across New York State.

Additionally, we do not do this work alone. We're asking for this funding because we are part of a coalition of frontline community food providers (food pantries, community meals programs, etc.). We helped found and are happy to actively participate in The Alliance for a Hunger Free New York, because we know that we can do more together than any one of us can do alone.

We appreciate your leadership and are grateful for your support.

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G Silverman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chef Greg Silverman, Executive Director and CEO of The West Side Campaign Against Hunger, Co-Founder and Executive Director of the RoundTable: Allies for Food Access, and Co-Founder and Board Chair of The Alliance for a Hunger Free New York

263 West 86<sup>th</sup> street

NY NY 10024

gsilverman@wscah.org