



THE LEGISLATURE  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

June 18, 2020

**VIA EMAIL**

Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of New York State  
Executive Chamber  
State Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We are writing in support of the Nutrition Outreach and Education Program (NOEP). NOEP has served this state for more than 30 years, providing SNAP outreach and application assistance services to New Yorkers in need of food assistance.

NOEP provides significant return on the state's investment. The state invests \$3,024,000 in NOEP, which draws down a dollar-for-dollar match of USDA SNAP outreach funds. All SNAP benefits are federally funded, bringing billions of dollars into the hands of local communities hardest hit by the pandemic. For every SNAP dollar spent at local grocers and farmers markets, it returns an estimated \$1.50 in economic activity. SNAP provides nine meals for every one meal provided by food banks and food pantries, and must be maximized in order to adequately meet the demand of so many in need.

Hunger Solutions New York manages NOEP, and needs a contract renewal to continue future operation of this critical program. The current contract expires on June 30, 2020, and as of yet, no award letter has been issued. Already, Hunger Solutions New York has directed NOEP providers to cease services by June 30, 2020. This represents 45 organizations across the state, with more than 68 people providing NOEP services that will be impacted. The loss of these services will mean a great economic cost to these agencies.

This is of great concern to us and to the many organizations that serve New York's hungry. COVID-19 has devastated communities across New York State and it has also had a multiplying effect on New York's budget deficit. We understand that you have been tirelessly working to secure support for the federal funding this state needs. This pandemic has presented us with difficult choices but providing for the immediate food needs of our residents must remain one of our top priorities.

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This is not the time to place NOEP in peril. With more New Yorkers going hungry, many for the first time, it is critical that NOEP continue to connect New Yorkers to federally funded SNAP benefits. We urge a quick resolution to these concerns.

Sincerely,

Andrew D. Hevesi, 28<sup>th</sup> AD  
Chair, NYS Assembly Committee on  
Social Services

Roxanne J. Persaud, 19<sup>th</sup> SD  
Chair, NYS Senate Committee on  
Social Services

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Inez E. Dickens, 70<sup>th</sup> AD  
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Latoya Joyner, 77<sup>th</sup> AD  
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