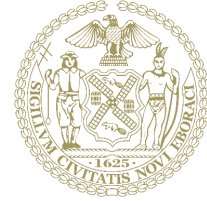




CONGRESS OF THE  
UNITED STATES  
WASHINGTON, DC



THE LEGISLATURE  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY, NY



THE COUNCIL OF THE  
CITY OF NEW YORK  
NEW YORK, NY

December 15, 2020

Joseph R. Biden  
President-Elect of the United States of America  
1401 Constitution Ave NW  
Washington, D.C., U.S.

Dear President-Elect Biden,

As members of the New York Congressional Delegation, New York State Legislature, and New York City Council, we write to draw your attention to the very real impacts of food insecurity on our state, particularly in the wake of necessary COVID-19 lockdown measures, and to request your support for increased funding and administrative action to address these critical matters upon your assumption of the Presidency.

The number of New Yorkers who are considered “food insecure” is projected to increase from 2.2 million to 3.1 million of our constituents due to COVID-19. Food insecurity in New York City alone is on pace to *nearly double*, increasing from 1.2 million to 2 million individuals. All told, 1 in 4 kids in our state could face hunger this year.

In addition to these most vulnerable of our constituents, millions of New Yorkers who are not classified as food insecure continue to come closer to the threshold, and face difficult decisions as budgets are strained from the economic fallout of the pandemic.

In light of this, we strongly urge your transition team and future Administration to implement the following requests for long-term investments to reduce hunger:

1. In order to improve the adequacy of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, use the low-cost food plan as the basis for determining benefit levels instead of the thrifty food plan—a change that will increase the maximum benefit by at least 15 percent—and increase the minimum benefit from \$16 to 30.

2. Strengthen SNAP's support for work by increasing the federal income eligibility level to 200% of the federal poverty level and removing or relaxing the eligibility asset limits.
3. Rescind the Trump Administration's harmful final rules related to Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) and Public Charge. Also, halt the Administration's proposed SNAP rules related to the Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) and Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE).
4. Provide immigrants nutrition program benefits and other basic needs support.
5. For the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, ensure that all SNAP recipients receive Emergency Allotments of SNAP, including households that already receive the maximum benefit; and provide retroactive benefits back to March 2020 for all who are eligible. Also, ensure that enhanced unemployment insurance is not countable income for SNAP or any other federal nutrition assistance program.
6. Increase access to school meals by eliminating the reduced-price category and expanding the eligibility threshold for free school meals to 250% of the federal poverty level (FPL).
7. Require direct certification for free school meals of children on Medicaid up to 250% FPL, and all disabled children regardless of income, or, alternatively, reinstate and expand the direct certification pilots from the Obama administration.
8. Extend categorical eligibility for free school meals to children placed in kinship care, children in households that participate in the Low-Income Heating Assistance Program (LIHEAP), and children in military households that receive the Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance
9. Close the summer meal gap by permanently authorizing nationwide expansion of the Summer EBT for Children Program (SEBTC) and eliminating the congregate site requirement for summer meals.
10. Reduce the eligibility threshold for open summer meal sites to include communities where at least 40%--rather than 50%--of students are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.
11. Streamline the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk Afterschool Meals component for non-profit sponsors, following the SFSP regulations.
12. Ensure access to the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) by making permanent the flexibilities allowing remote enrollment,

services and benefits issuance, and the facilitation of online ordering. Extend certification periods to 2 years and enrollment for children until their sixth birthday.

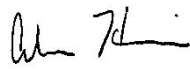
13. Support \$500 million for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) food purchases to address increased need for food assistance due to COVID-19. Emergency food providers need additional food to meet the unprecedented demand in communities nationwide.
14. Make the USDA SNAP online purchasing pilot program permanent and facilitate more vendor participation.
15. Amend SNAP policy to permit benefits to cover hot food items provided by traditional SNAP retailers.

The implementation of these requests would provide life-sustaining support to millions of New Yorkers and Americans who are struggling as a result of this pandemic. We greatly appreciate your consideration, and we thank you for working with us to get our country back on its feet.

Sincerely,



Grace Meng  
Member of Congress



Andrew Hevesi  
New York State Assembly



Roxanne J. Persaud  
New York State Senator



Karen Koslowitz  
New York City Council

/s/ Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress

/s/ Gregory W. Meeks  
Member of Congress

/s/ Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress

/s/ Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress

/s/ José E. Serrano  
Member of Congress

/s/ Kathleen M. Rice  
Member of Congress

/s/Michael Gianaris, Deputy Majority Leader  
New York State Senate

/s/ Monica R. Martinez  
New York State Senator

/s/ James F. Gaughran  
New York State Senator

/s/ Kevin Thomas  
New York State Senator

/s/ Anna M. Kaplan  
New York State Senator

/s/ John E. Brooks  
New York State Senator

/s/ James Sanders, Jr.  
New York State Senator

/s/ John C. Liu  
New York State Senator

/s/ Jessica Ramos  
New York State Senator

/s/ Leroy Comrie  
New York State Senator

/s/ Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.  
New York State Senator

/s/ Toby Ann Stavisky  
New York State Senator

/s/ Simcha Felder  
New York State Senator

/s/ Julia Salazar  
New York State Senator

/s/ Zellnor Y. Myrie  
New York State Senator

/s/ Kevin S. Parker  
New York State Senator

/s/ Andrew Gounardes  
New York State Senator

/s/ Brian P. Kavanagh  
New York State Senator

/s/ Brad Hoylman  
New York State Senator

/s/ Liz Krueger  
New York State Senator

/s/ Brian A. Benjamin  
New York State Senator

/s/ Robert Jackson  
New York State Senator

/s/ Luis R. Sepúlveda  
New York State Senator

/s/ Gustavo Rivera  
New York State Senator

/s/ Alessandra Biaggi  
New York State Senator

/s/ Jamaal T. Bailey  
New York State Senator

/s/ Shelley B. Mayer  
New York State Senator

/s/ Jen Metzger  
New York State Senator

/s/ Neil D. Breslin  
New York State Senator

/s/ Rachel May  
New York State Senator

/s/ Timothy M. Kennedy  
New York State Senator

/s/ Félix Ortiz, Assistant Speaker  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Nily Rozic, Chair  
New York State Assembly Office of State-Federal Relations

/s/ Fred Thiele  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Steven Englebright  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Kimberly Jean-Pierre  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Charles Lavine  
New York State Assembly

/s/ David McDonough  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Melissa Miller  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Michaelle C. Solages  
New York State Assembly

/s/ David Weprin  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Douglas Smith  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Edward Braunstein  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Daniel Rosenthal  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Vivian Cook  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Michael DenDekker  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Aravella Simotas  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Catherine Nolan  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Catalina Cruz  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Ron Kim  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Steven Cymbrowitz  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Mathylde Frontus  
New York State Assembly

/s/ William Colton  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Joseph Lentol  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Karen McMahan  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Jo Anne Simon  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Jaime Williams  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Charles Barron  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Michael Cusick  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Yuh-Line Niou  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Richard Gottfried  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Rebecca Seawright  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Latoya Joyner  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Michael Blake  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Linda Rosenthal  
New York State Assembly

/s/ J. Gary Pretlow  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Tom Abinanti  
New York State Assembly

/s/ John T. McDonald III  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Pamela Hunter  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Emily Gallagher  
New York State Assembly-elect

/s/ Carlina Rivera  
New York City Council

/s/ Justin Brannan  
New York City Council

/s/ Francisco Moya  
New York City Council

/s/ Carlos Menchaca  
New York City Council

/s/ Adrienne Adams  
New York City Council

/s/ Ben Kallos  
New York City Council

/s/ Alan Maisel  
New York City Council

/s/ Alicka Ampry-Samuel  
New York City Council

/s/ Nathalia Fernandez  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Inez Dickens  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Nader Sayegh  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Ellen Jaffee  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Donna Lupardo  
New York State Assembly

/s/ William Magnarelli  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Philip Ramos  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Jen Lunsford  
New York State Assembly-elect

/s/ Margaret Chin  
New York City Council

/s/ Andrew Cohen  
New York City Council

/s/ Barry S. Grodenchik  
New York City Council

/s/ Deborah Rose  
New York City Council

/s/ Mark Treyger  
New York City Council

/s/ Robert Holden  
New York City Council

/s/ Helen Rosenthal  
New York City Council

/s/ Fernando Cabrera  
New York City Council

/s/ Inez Barron  
New York City Council

/s/ Jeffrey Dinowitz  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Harvey Epstein  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Steven Otis  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Jonathan Jacobson  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Barbara Lifton  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Harry Bronson  
New York State Assembly

/s/ Anna Kelles  
New York State Assembly-elect

/s/ Vanessa Gibson  
New York City Council

/s/ Robert Cornegy  
New York City Council

/s/ Daniel Dromm  
New York City Council

/s/ Costa Constantinides  
New York City Council

/s/ Keith Powers  
New York City Council

/s/ Mark Gjonaj  
New York City Council

/s/ Diana Ayala  
New York City Council

/s/ Peter Koo  
New York City Council