



Public Policy Framework

Improving Food Systems

Reliable access to donated nutritious food depends on a statewide food system that produces in abundance, is sustainable, encourages food rescue, and responds to the preferences of all its residents. This goal requires an effective policy environment for our food systems: farmers, food manufacturers and processors, distributors, food businesses, and related partners. It also requires safe and equitable practices for the workforces employed in our food systems. The pandemic has exposed where many of these gaps exist. We can and need to fix them. This includes investing in our hunger relief distribution network. It is vital to better support and provide dedicated state funding to our regional distributors and large distributors, local pantries, and meal programs responding to the increased need we see in communities across our state.

Feeding Washington will consider policy measures that improve food systems, incentivize the conditions for food rescue, and build operational capacity for nonprofit, charitable hunger relief.

Preventing Hunger

Government nutrition assistance is the one of the most effective ways to prevent hunger and address it. We have seen the positive impact of government assistance during the pandemic and know it remains the best options to address food insecurity in our communities. We believe the various levels of government are crucial partners to ending hunger statewide. Beyond partnering to deliver food to communities across our state, we recognize the government has the ability reduce the demand that strains our hunger relief network by continued investment in benefit programs.

Feeding Washington will consider measures to protect and increase government funding levels, improve access to, and increase program participation for federal and state nutrition assistance programs. [like SNAP, TEFAP, EFAP, Basic Food, CSFP, FINI, F2FP, WIC, School Meals, and Summer EBT]

Reforming Taxes, Budget, and Nonprofits

Support for nonprofit organizations is conditioned by structures in tax code, regulations, statutes, and municipal ordinances and codes. Tax policy plays a key role in the level of resources available to fight against hunger and can incentivize food rescue.

Feeding Washington will consider measures that impact the regulatory and tax environment for charitable hunger relief organizations, operationally and through the donation of food and funds to food banks and other nonprofit organizations.

Connecting Hunger and Health

Food insecurity negatively effects both physical health and mental wellbeing. Stable access to nutritious and culturally relevant food improves wellness and can result in lowering health-care costs for neighbors struggling with hunger. We believe families and individuals are best supported in a continuum of care that does not silo the challenges they face.

Feeding Washington will consider measures that positively impact the health and wellbeing of people experiencing hunger by providing nutritious and culturally relevant food, promoting nutrition education and healthy eating, encouraging collaboration across sectors to address food insecurity and wellbeing, increasing the utilization of nutrition assistance programs, and addressing food insecurity in the healthcare setting.

Reducing Poverty

Hunger is caused by multiple and often interconnected factors: inadequate financial resources, unaffordable or inaccessible healthcare, a lack of stable and affordable housing, under-employment, and scarcity of living-wage jobs. We understand that we need more food to feel our neighbors today while also supporting investments that prevent hunger tomorrow.

Feeding Washington will consider policy measures that have a nexus between poverty and hunger, especially around household stability, affordable housing, living wage jobs, and related basic needs.

Working Equity and Justice

Hunger is also caused by systemic racism and social injustice. This and other social determinants of hunger provide opportunities to advance policies that challenge the inequitable and unjust systems that create and perpetuate poverty.

Feeding Washington will consider policy measures that address equity & social justice for vulnerable and low-income children, adults and seniors, with emphasis on low-income families of color, immigrant, and under-resourced communities.