

# Governor, senator to be lauded as 'hunger fighters'

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SACRAMENTO -- Food bank officials and supporters will honor Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sen. Dean Florez, D-Shafter, as hunger fighters today for their roles in helping get food to victims of the January freeze.

Declaring May 8 Hunger Action Day, food bank advocates will rally on the Capitol steps to award "hunger fighter" awards to Schwarzenegger, who directed hundreds of thousands of dollars and truckloads of food to food banks in Kern and other hard-hit counties in the wake of the freeze.

Florez was active in pushing for a major state role in getting food and other relief to freeze victims.

"Five million Californians report that they are unable to afford the food they need -- including many seniors and working families whose budgets for food are squeezed by rising costs of living," Kim McCoy Wade, executive director of the California Association of Food Banks, said in an announcement.

She said that is why the association is pushing for \$9.1 million in the pending state budget for emergency food and is also lobbying Congress and the administration of President Bush against proposals to cut food stamp aid and for a provision that would make more people eligible for food stamps.

Florez could not be reached Monday afternoon for comment.