California Association of Food Banks
California Association of Food Banks (CAFB) provides a unified voice among food banks to maximize their ability to build a well-nourished California. To accomplish this mission, the membership of 42 food banks focuses on increasing the visibility of hunger and its solutions, assisting Californians in accessing food assistance and nutrition programs, distributing fresh produce through the Farm to Family program, and influencing public policy at the state and federal level. To learn more about CAFB visit www.cafoodbanks.org.

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Policy Advocacy: What and Why?

What is Advocacy?
At the most basic level, advocacy is simply speaking up about an issue of concern. In this sense food banking is strongly grounded in the principal of advocacy, since recognizing that hunger is a problem and deciding to do something about it is itself an act of advocacy. The term advocacy, however, is generally used in the nonprofit sector in a more specific sense, to indicate actions taken towards institutions or the public to influence perceptions and outcomes related to a particular issue. There are several types of advocacy, including grassroots advocacy, media advocacy, and policy advocacy. This guide is principally focused on policy advocacy.

Policy advocacy is the process of calling for changes in public policy – the laws, regulations, and institutional practices governing our society. Generally, this means influencing policymakers in rulemaking institutions at the federal, state, or local level. This guide focuses on best practices for legislative advocacy with state legislators and Members of Congress, but many of the same strategies apply for local policymakers and for administrative advocacy with government agencies at all levels.

Advocacy does not necessarily mean lobbying. Advocacy encompasses a broad range of activities, from gathering stories to educating legislators about an issue. Lobbying is advocating for a specific policy, such as a bill, budget item, or ballot measure. And yes, food banks can lobby. Actual lobbying, however, usually occupies only a small portion of a food bank’s total time and resources devoted to advocacy.

Why Advocate?
Food banks in California and nationwide have increasingly incorporated policy advocacy as a central strategy in their mission to provide food to the hungry and to end hunger in the communities they serve. Strong advocacy efforts by food banks in California have been integral to protecting and expanding the supply of emergency food through maintaining funding for the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) in a shrinking federal budget. The California food bank network also successfully advocated in 2011 to create a state tax credit for fresh fruit and vegetable crop donations made to food banks in the state.

Beyond securing funding for emergency food poundage, policy advocacy is essential for protecting and strengthening the public safety net programs that keep so many households from going hungry, SNAP/CalFresh (formerly known as food stamps) chief among them. SNAP/CalFresh benefits provide a nutrition lifeline to households at risk of hunger and stimulate the local economies where they are spent. Food bank advocacy efforts have played a key role in protecting funding for these programs at the federal level and in removing unnecessary and burdensome application requirements, such as fingerprinting, at the state level.

Food bank staff have specialized knowledge about hunger in their communities, and that knowledge can be very powerful when turned into action through advocacy. Food
banks serve constituents who often have a limited voice in the policy decisions that affect them, and the food bank is sometimes the only organization in a community with the resources to bring those voices into the policy process. By engaging in advocacy, food banks can both lift up the stories of hunger and increase their own visibility in a positive way with elected officials, partner organizations, and potential donors.

Ending hunger is no small challenge. Making a significant dent in the growing number of poor and hungry households requires a strong and accessible nutrition safety net in addition to a robust emergency food assistance network. Proactive policy advocacy is essential to improving and maintaining both forms of nutrition assistance. Engaging in policy advocacy can seem daunting at first, but a little advocacy can go a long way in the fight to end hunger. There are also many resources at the state and national level dedicated to making advocacy as easy as possible for food banks. Hopefully this guide is useful in providing ideas for successful advocacy practices. And always remember, the policy team at California Association of Food Banks (CAFB) is eager to provide any additional support to make your advocacy practice a success.

About this Guide
This guide offers a sampling of potential policy advocacy activities for food banks to consider. Hopefully the range of examples will offer new ideas and strategies to food banks at all levels of advocacy capacity and experience. Advocacy best practices with yellow-highlighted endnotes (e.g. 1.) are accompanied in the guide by correspondingly numbered case examples in yellow text boxes describing how California food banks have put these strategies into action. Examples in the guide come from conversations with food bank staff in telephone surveys from 2011 and at the first Food Bank Advocacy Peer-to-Peer Meeting hosted by CAFB in Sacramento in April, 2012.

For more information about the practices and case examples included in this guide, or any aspect of food bank advocacy, contact one of CAFB’s policy staff members:

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Policy Advocacy Basics

There are many ways for food banks to seek policy changes to reduce hunger and poverty. Sometimes the array of advocacy options can seem overwhelming, but if you are just starting out don’t worry about trying to do everything. You can be strategic about adding just a few advocacy activities to your work that together form a complete foundation for an advocacy program at your food bank.

There are several steps in policy advocacy that build towards ultimately influencing public policy outcomes: **staying informed about policy, educating and building relationships with policymakers, and lobbying for specific policy outcomes.** You will need to stay informed about policy developments to know when to take action, and policymakers are much more likely to respond to your lobbying requests if you have spent the time educating them (sometimes over many years) about the problem of hunger in their districts.

If you can include at least one activity in each of these three areas in your scope of work you will be on your way to becoming an effective policy advocate. Over time, you can hopefully grow your capacity to increase your impact with other advocacy strategies detailed later in this guide. Below are some examples of policy activities in each of the three basic foundation areas.

**Staying Informed About Policy**

- Sign up for action alerts from CAFB ([www.cafoodbanks.org](http://www.cafoodbanks.org)) for state and federal policy updates and actions tailored for food banks.
- For more frequent and detailed updates, sign up for e-mail newsletters and alerts from both California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA) ([www.cfpa.net](http://www.cfpa.net)) and the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) ([www.frac.org](http://www.frac.org)).
- Use social media tools, especially Twitter, for the most up-to-date information on fast-moving policy developments. See Appendix B for suggested Twitter users to follow.
- Invite CAFB staff to your food bank to brief you, your staff, agencies, or community members on the latest policy developments at the federal and state level.

**Educating and Building Relationships with Policymakers**

- If you have not interacted with your elected officials’ offices before, arrange a meeting with the district offices of your state legislators and Members of Congress to inform them about hunger in their districts and the work your food bank is doing to help. CAFB can assist you in compiling this information and preparing talking points. See Appendix C for resources on local, state, and national hunger data.
- Always introduce your food bank and the issue of hunger to any newly elected legislators or Members of Congress in your service area.

**Tip: Don’t Forget Staff!**

Don’t forget to build strong relationships with key staff members in the offices of your elected representatives. In fact, your interactions with staff are as important as building a good relationship with the elected official. A staff director or legislative aide may ultimately have as much influence as the elected official in working on the details of legislation, and will generally be able to dedicate more time and attention to your requests.
• Add your state and federal elected officials and their staff to your organization’s mailing list. Make sure that any online newsletters, reports, and updates are sent to them and their staff as well.

• Invite an elected official to visit your food bank, tour a distribution site, observe a CalFresh outreach team, or listen in on a helpline call (with client permission).

• Host a legislative information session, such as a “legislative breakfast,” for the district staff of your state or federal elected officials and educate them about hunger and related legislation you support. 1.

• Attend CAFB’s Annual Legislative Day, held every spring in Sacramento, to meet with your state legislators and their Capitol staff. CAFB can assist with travel costs for organizations with limited budgets.

• Attend the annual National Anti-Hunger Policy Conference organized by Feeding America and the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) in Washington, D.C. and meet with your Members of Congress and their Capitol staff. Conference scholarships are often available through Feeding America, FRAC, and CAFB for organizations with limited budgets.

• On the local level, give periodic updates on community need and your services to your city council and county board of supervisors.

• Meet regularly with your county department of human or social services to explore how you can work together on increasing CalFresh enrollment and addressing hunger and poverty in your community.

Lobbying for Policy Change

• Respond to action alerts from CAFB or other organizations to send letters of support (CAFB usually provides a sample letter) or call your elected officials.

• Write a letter, call, or visit your elected official(s) to show your support for specific legislation you become aware of. CAFB can assist you in preparing talking points.

• Write a letter to the editor in support of specific policies. See Appendix A for recent examples written by food bank directors.

• Attend CAFB’s Annual Legislative Day and advocate for the bills on CAFB’s policy agenda.

• Travel to Washington, D.C. for the National Anti-Hunger Policy Conference or other occasions to lobby for legislation with your members of Congress.

• Participate in CAFB postcard, paper plate, or similar campaigns around major policy issues such as the state budget, Child Nutrition Reauthorization, or the Farm Bill. See Appendix A for examples of past campaign materials.

• Speak at or organize a press event or rally for a legislative or budget priority.

1. “Legislative Breakfast” in San Diego

In early May 2011, Feeding America San Diego, Jewish Family Services of San Diego, and the San Diego Hunger Coalition partnered to host a “legislative breakfast” to educate staff from San Diego-area state legislators about hunger in their community and pending state legislation that could help. Community members offered personal stories of how policies such as the fingerprinting requirement in the CalFresh program posed barriers to accessing nutrition assistance, and asked for support of several bills to help reduce these barriers. Several San Diego legislators ultimately voted in favor of a package of significant anti-hunger legislation in 2011, including removing the fingerprinting requirement from CalFresh.
Choosing from the Advocacy “Menu”

Certain policy advocacy activities require more time and resources than others. When considering your options for advocacy, it makes sense to choose activities that best match your capacity at that moment and the relative urgency of the policy issue at hand. If you imagine your advocacy options as items on a menu, they can be broken down into a hierarchy of sorts depending on the complexity and resources required to complete them, with advocacy appetizers, lunch specials, and entrees. This can be an additional way to help categorize the advocacy activities already discussed. If you are thinking about how to build your advocacy capacity and increase your impact, consider how you might include more lunch specials and entrees in your advocacy “diet.”

**Appetizers**
- Send emails, mail and make calls to legislators.
- Use Facebook, Twitter, and other social media to urge support from legislators and promote actions they take in support of your priorities.
- Send, or sign your organization on to, position letters.
- Participate in local, state and federal coalitions.

**Lunch Specials**
- Conduct regular visits and communication with legislators and staff. In-district visits at their office or a nutrition site can be highly effective.
- Build relationships with legislators/government officials and their staff.
- Optimize opportunities to meet or host a site visit with legislators/government officials and their staff when they are in the district.

**Entrees**
- Gather stories to use for advocacy.
- Engage agencies in policy advocacy.
- Involve clients in policy advocacy.
- Organize staff, agencies, and clients to participate in hearings, rallies, or Hunger Action Day.

Many of the “lunch special” and “entrée” advocacy activities listed here are discussed in greater depth later in this guide.

Although your choice of advocacy activities and tactics will largely be determined by questions of capacity and urgency, it is worth noting that certain forms of lobbying are generally considered more impactful than others. Surveys of senior legislative staff in Congress suggest that legislators are most likely to be influenced by in-person visits from constituents, contact from a constituent who represents other constituents, and individualized postal letters, in that order. See Appendix A for the full results of this survey.
Increasing Advocacy Capacity at Your Food Bank

Shortages in staff time and financial resources, and sometimes wariness to take policy positions potentially controversial with the community, can present challenges for food banks seeking to engage in more policy advocacy. These challenges may ultimately limit a food bank’s scope of activities, but there are some strategies food banks can employ to help reduce these limitations.

Get Your Board on Board
Be sure to educate your board members about the importance of policy to a food bank’s mission of ending hunger. Having your board’s full support will greatly expand your opportunities for advocacy. Depending on your board, gaining their support for policy advocacy may be relatively easy or require a long-term process of education and small steps towards doing more advocacy activities. Your board members can also be a great resource for advocacy and may even provide unique opportunities to contact policymakers that you are trying to influence. Several food banks have formed board committees on policy to help with strategy and community outreach. If your food bank or parent organization is unable to publicly endorse legislation, consider asking a board member with strong community ties to sign a letter of support or make a call instead.  

Find Alternative Staffing Options
Several food banks have found ways to augment staff resources for policy without significant additional costs. Consider partnering with a local college or university to offer an internship that supports policy, or offer policy projects as options for food bank volunteers. Example projects include creating an e-mail list for agencies or interviewing clients for a story bank. Note that anyone fully funded by government resources, such as AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers, cannot lobby for specific legislative changes (they can, however, educate the public and policymakers about issues of hunger and poverty). Volunteers can also help make more time available for policy advocacy by reducing the workload of non-advocacy activities for staff who juggle advocacy with other responsibilities. 

Form or Join Policy Partnerships
Partnering with other organizations or coalitions on policy can significantly increase your impact. If your food bank has limited capacity for policy work, consider collaborating with neighboring food banks to coordinate your advocacy efforts together. Sometimes food banks with greater policy capacity can carry the message for their neighbors during advocacy opportunities like CAFB Legislative Day or meetings in Washington, D.C. 

2. Board Buy-In
The board of directors of Food for People: The Food Bank of Humboldt County formed the Advocacy, Communications, and Education (ACE) Committee to help strengthen the work of the food bank in those areas. The board members on the committee meet monthly with relevant food bank staff to talk through ideas, help frame issues, and provide any expertise or resources that would be useful to the food bank’s advocacy efforts. The ACE Committee recently worked with food bank staff to develop a 30 minute Hunger 101 presentation for the full board and potential business partners in the community.

3. Special Volunteer Skills
Recognizing the opportunity to put a volunteer’s life skills to good use, the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano asked a retired journalist volunteering with the food bank to interview clients about their experiences with hunger and food assistance. The often poignant responses were compiled in a “story bank” to be used for fundraising, media campaigns, and policy advocacy.
Involve Your Whole Staff

In many cases, successful policy advocacy is supported by food bank staff in multiple departments. For example, warehouse staff can distribute fliers with action alerts, CalFresh outreach staff might identify potential community advocates and stories, food procurement staff can be essential in reaching out to growers for support on anti-hunger legislation, and agency relations staff can help you engage partner agencies in policy work. Taking time to “demystify” the policy process for all food bank staff and achieve their buy-in on advocacy’s role in fighting hunger will increase your food bank’s capacity for policy advocacy over the long run. 

4. Central Coast Hunger Coalition

Advocates from Monterey County Food Bank, San Benito Community Food Bank, and Second Harvest Food Banks of Santa Cruz County help to convene the Central Coast Hunger Coalition, which brings together a broad range of community organizations to advocate against hunger and also increases collaboration between the three food banks. Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Cruz often represents the policy concerns of this broader coalition in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. as it is the larger food bank able to support more travel opportunities.

5. Demystifying Policy for Other Staff

Policy advocacy staff at the Alameda County Community Food Bank have made it a practice to regularly meet and share their work with colleagues in other departments, to help “demystify” policy work for other staff and incorporate policy advocacy more into the shared vision and goals of the food bank.

Food Bank Guide to Policy Advocacy
Educating and Mobilizing Your Community

The previous section highlighted ways for food banks to engage directly in advocacy, where a representative of the food bank takes on the educating and lobbying for policy change. This is the most immediate way for food banks to use their valued position in the community and unique expertise on hunger to advocate for policy change. Going a step further, food banks are also in a great position to multiply their impact by using that same influence and expertise in mobilizing other community members to take action. Three areas present significant opportunities for food banks to multiply their impact: educating the community about hunger, engaging agencies in advocacy, and engaging community members in advocacy.

Educating the Community
Because they serve people struggling with food hardship every day, food banks have a unique perspective and expertise on hunger to share with the community. Many people may be unaware of the severity of hunger in their communities, or of the benefits provided by food banks and federal nutrition programs like SNAP/CalFresh. Educating the public and informing the conversation around hunger and poverty are critical prerequisites to building the support for policy changes to address these problems. Here are some examples of how food banks can raise awareness about hunger and poverty:

- Write a letter to the editor or an Op-Ed. CAFB can assist with research and drafting for letters.
- Use social media to follow research, news, and policy updates and spread the word.
- Table on hunger and food policy issues at community forums, fairs, or other events.
- Organize a community policy forum or town hall and discussion about hunger and policy responses. Invite local, state, and federal elected officials. 6.
- Conduct regular trainings or presentations on hunger and policy responses for local schools or other youth groups.
- Get the Executive Director or another staff member to take the CalFresh/food stamp challenge and blog about the experience. Even better, get an elected official or community leader to take the challenge.
- Collect stories at food distribution sites to use in advocacy and communications. Consider creating a story bank available to advocates, the media, or public (with consent from clients).
- Develop good relationships with local media outlets and work with them periodically to develop stories. CAFB can assist in this process, and will periodically send sample media releases on timely research or policy developments that you can pitch to local media.

6. Hunger Town Hall
In September of 2011, Alameda County Community Food Bank hosted a well-attended Hunger Town Hall to help raise awareness about hunger in the community, discuss possible policy solutions, and build support from local legislators. The town hall featured County Supervisor Wilma Chan, State Assemblymember Nancy Skinner, and Eric Manke from CAFB.
7. Food Gap Analysis
The Second Harvest Food Bank of San Mateo & Santa Clara Counties has partnered for several years with Santa Clara University Leavey School of Business to conduct a Food Gap Analysis. This collaborative study analyzes the meal need in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, and how much of that need is being filled by food bank services and federal nutrition programs – information that is very effective in making the case for stronger anti-hunger policy.

8. Targeted Agency Outreach
In advocating for AB 828 in 2011, a bill to remove the lifetime ban on CalFresh for certain drug-related felony convictions, Alameda County Community Food Bank conducted targeted outreach with several agencies serving populations most likely to be affected by the legislation. The agencies worked with their clients to find personal stories about this onerous barrier to nutrition access and the food bank effectively incorporated these voices in their advocacy on the bill.

Engaging Agencies
Many food banks already engage their agencies in policy advocacy to a certain extent, but statewide, agencies represent an enormous untapped potential for impacting policy to reduce hunger and poverty. If even a fraction of the roughly 5,000 agencies served by CAFB member food banks engaged in actions as simple as signing a letter of support for a bill it would multiply the policy impact of the food bank network many times over.

Food banks often encounter numerous challenges to engaging and mobilizing agencies in policy advocacy. Primarily, agencies often have little to no staff time available to devote to advocacy. As mostly service-oriented organizations, agencies may also be unfamiliar with the policy process and wary of engaging in advocacy due to funding restrictions or the absence of an organizational history with advocacy. This makes it important for food banks to offer easier, relatively quick advocacy options for agencies, such as distributing postcards or signing a template letter. Some further ideas for engaging agencies:

- Maintain an e-mail list or listserv of all your agencies and periodically send important policy updates and action alerts.
- Or, take your contact list a step further and use communication tools like Constant Contact, BaseCamp, or Google Groups to keep agencies and other partners informed about policy and advocacy opportunities.
- Include key policy updates and action alerts in your food bank newsletter.
- Create a quarterly short policy newsletter for agencies that they can include in their general newsletter.
- Include policy updates and advocacy training in annual agency summits. CAFB can assist to develop, or lead, policy presentations or workshops.
- Hold smaller, more frequent policy trainings or workshops for agencies. CAFB can provide support.
- Conduct one-on-one or small group meetings at agency locations to strategize about how the food bank and agency can collaborate more closely on advocacy.
- Engage and mobilize specific agencies whose clients would be impacted by a particular policy change, for example contacting senior centers to weigh in on proposed cuts to CSFP. This can also be a useful strategy for finding client stories from agencies to use in advocacy efforts.
- Coordinate an agency advisory committee on policy that includes agency representatives and leaders.

Use events like Hunger Action Month (September) to highlight hunger in your community through blogs, a CalFresh challenge, media release, or by working with your city council or county board of supervisors to pass a local resolution or proclamation on hunger.

Collaborate with university professors and students to produce new research on hunger, poverty, or policy responses in your community.
representatives to help direct agency engagement in advocacy.

- Whatever methods you use to engage agencies, try to establish continuity in your outreach, for example building from trainings to direct contact to an advocacy ask over the course of several months. This strengthens your relationship and helps agencies feel more prepared when you do ask them to take action.

**Engaging Community Members**

Educating your community about hunger is one important step towards policy change. The next is to mobilize community members to be strong advocates against hunger and poverty. Policymakers pay attention to constituents, especially when constituents take the time to make a personal visit, write a letter, or call. Food banks can mobilize community members on at least three levels: clients served by food banks, volunteers, and food bank supporters. These categories will obviously overlap for some people.

**Food Bank Clients.** Ensuring that people who have experienced food hardship have a voice in shaping anti-hunger policy is of the utmost importance. Too often the people who will be most affected by policy changes are not represented in important policy discussions and decisions. Individuals with first-hand knowledge of hunger and nutrition programs have an extremely valuable, and unique, expertise to add to the discussion. This first-hand experience is also extremely powerful and often grabs the attention of policymakers at an emotional level that can be more effective than numbers and charts. You can engage community members in advocacy on an ad-hoc basis as the opportunity arises, but a more effective way is to form a community advocacy group or committee. 9.

Here are some tips:

- To recruit group members, talk to people during food distributions and CalFresh outreach. Look for passionate individuals and those with good stories. Ask your agency partners if they know clients who might be particularly interested in getting involved with advocacy. Offer advocacy as an option for incoming food bank volunteers. If you are just beginning, start with clients or volunteers you already know well.
- Consider taking a course, or doing some studying, on facilitation skills before leading the group. CAFB can assist in identifying courses and materials.
- Before starting a group, identify your goals. Are you creating the group to engage more volunteers? Develop leaders? Educate the community? Impact policy change?
- Formulate a clear mission for the group. Do you want to focus just on hunger, tackle community food security, or work on a broad range of poverty issues? There's no right answer. Consider in advance whether you want the food bank or the group members to set the parameters for the mission.

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9. **Community Advocates Against Hunger**

In 2002, policy staff at Alameda County Community Food Bank (ACCFB) began an effort to engage more community members affected by hunger in advocacy. They formed Community Advocates Against Hunger (CAAH), which is now open to any interested volunteers. The group’s mission is to end hunger in communities near and far, and their goal is to do this through developing effective strategies for reaching elected officials to improve and expand access to government nutrition programs for all people in need.

ACCFB offers joining the CAAH group as an option for every volunteer who comes through their doors. The food bank has ensured that participation in the group counts for volunteer hours toward Court Community Service and CalWORKs Work Experience requirements. Additionally, community advocates are sometimes identified and invited to the group by CalFresh outreach staff when they encounter a client with a story they want to voice. All told, about 50 community advocates are on the CAAH e-mail listserv. The group meets monthly, with most meetings attended by 8-10 advocates. ACCFB organizes advocates to attend rallies, state legislative hearings, and Hunger Action Day in Sacramento every year. ACCFB staff also regularly check in with CAAH members about the food bank’s public policy agenda.
• Establish a decision-making structure for the group. Sometimes it works better to have the group choose a leadership committee, or leadership positions, to take on a larger responsibility.

• Be considerate of the costs of participation. Consider providing food, child care, and rides for group members, or offering modest reimbursements for participation.

• Be sensitive to the language needs of group members. Provide interpretation as appropriate. Similarly, make sure handouts and other materials are translated as needed.

• Identify advocacy opportunities in advance. Find a small success you can accomplish early to build group morale and commitment. Examples could include gathering at a rally, speaking at a city council meeting, or presenting to a classroom or community group. CAFB can assist in identifying advocacy opportunities at hearings and other events in Sacramento.

• Organize a delegation from your group to attend Hunger Action Day in Sacramento every May. Funds to support travel may be available through CAFB and the California Hunger Action Coalition (CHAC). However there is no guarantee of funding, so it may be prudent to fundraise ahead of time.

• Consider seeking the input of the community advocacy group in determining the policy priorities for the food bank.

• Make participation count towards volunteer hours for Court Community Service, GA, and CalWORKS Work Experience (WEX).

Food Bank Volunteers. Volunteers at your food bank can also be a valuable resource for advocacy activities. Engaging volunteers can be as easy as asking them to complete a quick action during volunteer orientation. For example, they could sign a postcard, letter, or petition. Also consider offering advocacy projects as an option for every incoming volunteer. People who have experienced hunger or who are especially passionate about policy change might be good recruits for a community advocacy committee. Others might have special skills such as journalism, photography, or website design that can be useful for advocacy-related activities such as collecting stories and creating newsletter inserts, action alerts, briefings, community profiles, or a story bank if you don’t have the paid staff capacity for those projects. If you run a community advocacy committee, volunteers could help with child care, providing rides, and other logistics. 10.

Food Bank Supporters. If you maintain a listserv or newsletter for food bank supporters and donors, you already have the means to reach out to a large group of people who are likely to be supportive of your food bank’s policy priorities. For such a broad audience, it may be prudent to save your “asks” for one or two really big policy initiatives each year, such as the Farm Bill or Child Nutrition Reauthorization. Some food banks have successfully mobilized supporters to make calls to their Members of Congress on high profile policy issues by blasting an alert at a key moment. Also consider reaching out individually with donors who have the connections to make a direct personal appeal to a legislator, Member of Congress, or other government official.

10. Community Advocates Committee
Redwood Empire Food Bank in Santa Rosa formed a Community Advocates Committee in 2011. The committee has been successful in mobilizing interested food bank volunteers to attend regular meetings, learn more about the food bank’s work and anti-hunger policy, and advocate with legislative offices locally and in Sacramento.
Advocacy Networks

However strong your policy advocacy program is already, your impact can be both broadened and strengthened by joining forces with others to advocate for policy change. This is especially true for smaller food banks, where staff and resource limitations may constrain advocacy opportunities. By seeking out other food banks and organizations with similar policy goals in your region you can leverage your collective resources for greater impact, while still contributing the unique voice and expertise of your food bank. Coalitions can sometimes take positions your food bank might not want to lead on but still support, will bring new allies into anti-hunger campaigns, and can sometimes use their collective influence to secure grants for local policy work.

Some ways of building advocacy networks include starting a local hunger task force, bringing the food access perspective to other policy coalitions, and partnering with other food banks to increase your impact.

Hunger Task Forces
Starting a hunger task force can be an excellent way of bringing together diverse stakeholders in your community to collaborate on opportunities for fighting hunger. Such a task force can serve as a platform for educating the community, brainstorming community and policy responses to hunger, and coordinating advocacy for policy change. When starting a hunger task force, you might consider inviting your agencies, other community service providers, the county department of social welfare, medical providers, grocers, growers, and city officials to participate.

One potential place to start the conversation for a hunger task force is with local data on poverty and hunger, such as California Food Policy Advocates’ county profiles, or Feeding America’s Map the Meal Gap (see Appendix B for more resources). After examining the local data, stakeholders can add their first-hand experience to the picture then discuss steps for addressing some of the factors contributing to hunger in the community. In some cases, a prominent local figure such as a mayor can be a great partner to convene important stakeholders and elevate the issue of hunger in the community. 12.

Policy Coalitions
There are most likely several coalitions in your community with an issue focus that overlaps with hunger in some way. Examples could include food policy councils, or coalitions focused on nutrition, health, fitness, farming, gleaning, community food security, or children’s issues. Access to healthy food is a central factor for all of these interests. As the local expert on hunger, your food bank can be a valuable partner in bringing the food access perspective to discussions on local food systems and community health. This can raise the importance of hunger in a broader range of forums and also build partnerships in new sectors that can prove very helpful for policy

12. Hunger Task Force for San Joaquin County
In response to a report on hunger and low CalFresh participation in San Joaquin County, the Emergency Food Bank of Stockton/San Joaquin joined with Catholic Charities, the City of Stockton, the County of San Joaquin, and other local partners in 2006 to form the Hunger Task Force for San Joaquin County. Support from the Mayor of Stockton, County Supervisors, other local leaders was key to convening a diverse group of stakeholders, including over 30 nutrition agencies, churches, and schools to collaborate on fighting hunger in the county.

The Task Force meets quarterly and provides an important network for collaboration among the county’s organizations with an interest in anti-hunger advocacy. Over six years, Task Force-supported programs like the Mobile Farmer’s Market, Farm to Family fresh produce, a semi-annual Hunger Summit, and targeted CalFresh outreach by several agencies have moved San Joaquin County from one of the worst in the state for hunger and food insecurity into a much improved position.
advocacy. Case in point: food growers and grocers have recently joined with food banks to advocate for boosting CalFresh enrollment, lending the issue greater traction.

13. **Local Policy Coalitions**

Food for People: The Food Bank for Humboldt County increases their impact in the community by bringing a focus on hunger to a broad range of policy coalitions working on related issues. The food bank participates in Humboldt Community for Activity and Nutrition (Humboldt CAN), the Humboldt Food Policy Council, the local hospital advocacy committee, St. Joseph Health System Humboldt Community Resource Centers, and the county network of Family Resource Centers. Building relationships with these networks has expanded the community of organizations in Humboldt County aware of hunger issues and potentially willing to add their support to anti-hunger policy reforms.

**Food Bank Partnerships**

In several locations in California food banks share congressional and state legislative districts. In these places, it makes sense for food banks to collaborate closely in advocating with their shared elected officials. Combining forces strengthens the message and can reduce the workload for each food bank, or perhaps enable a more ambitious advocacy campaign when food banks combine resources and staff strengths. Similarly, food banks can benefit greatly from sharing advocacy strategies and best practices. There are food banks in every corner of the state finding innovative ways to advocate with available resources. Contact CAFB if you have questions or just want some ideas for advocacy activities. Chances are there’s another food bank somewhere working on a similar project that would be happy to share resources.
Appendix A: Advocacy Tools

*Five Steps to a Successful Lobbying Visit*

**1. Prepare for the Meeting**
- Prepare for a meeting that will last no more than 15 minutes.
- Decide which issue you want to highlight and have the related documents ready to review with the elected official and/or staff member.
- If you’re part of a group, take a moment outside the office to decide what each person’s role will be, including who will lead the meeting.

**2. Know the issues!**
- The most important things that you know are the stories of hungry people, your community, and your food bank, so always start your visit with that conversation.
- Review the available talking points, data, and fact sheets on the issues you will be discussing. Try to memorize the one or two key facts that provide the most compelling support for your “ask.”

**3. Know Your “Ask”**
- Review available talking points to understand the different “asks” for your issue.
- Choose two or three “asks” that resonate best with the story you want to tell.

**4. Use CAFB as a Resource**
- Check with CAFB policy staff for the latest news on policy updates, suggested talking points, and to ask any questions you may have as you prepare for your meetings.
- Keep CAFB policy staff informed about key details and useful information from your meetings with elected officials.

**5. Finally, remember that success comes in many forms.**
As you know, we are facing a very tough political climate and severe budget constraints at the federal and state levels, so you might not hear a lot of quick “yeses” in response to your asks. But try not to be discouraged, because...
- You will hear valuable information that will help us strategize about what we can win and what we need to do to get there.
- AND, it’s important that food banks stay visible in this environment, so we and the people we serve don’t become even more vulnerable.
- AND, we always want to put our marker down, so that when resources do become available our priorities and our strength are clear.
FRAC’s Tips for Lobbying Visits

Arranging Your Hill Visit:

✓ **Call ahead** to schedule an appointment with your Member or the Congressional Aide assigned to work on your specific issue. Requests to meet with Members may need to be in writing. All information can be found through your Member’s website, [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov). The Capitol switchboard is (202) 225-3121.

✓ **Know some background info on your Member.**
  - Do some research: look up your Member’s biographical information, resume, congressional committee assignments, caucuses joined, etc.
  - Study voting records.

✓ **Prepare a concise one-page fact sheet to leave behind.** The fact sheet should be simple and to the point. You can include any of the following suggestions:
  - Descriptions of the problems you want solved and specifically what actions you want the elected official to take to solve them.
  - Information about your organization – services you provide or impacts your program has in the District/State.
  - Local press clippings.
  - Photographs and easy-to-understand charts and graphs that make your point. If you have been unable to get your Member to visit your agency, prepare a scrapbook or photo album that captures the services you provide.

✓ **Research opposing views and prepare talking points that address these concerns.**
  - Know how to respectfully counter an argument that disagrees with your position and back up your position with facts and statistics; avoid moral or emotionally-charged arguments.

Pre-Visit Checklist:

✓ **Focus on the purpose of your visit and be organized.**

✓ **Choose one person to serve as a facilitator for the meeting** - This person will make introductory remarks and ask members of the group to introduce themselves.

✓ **Be on time.**

✓ **Be patient** — Often your Member/aide will be late because of a hearing, committee meeting, voting session, etc.

✓ **Be prepared** – If your appointment gets cut short, make sure you have a “2-minute elevator ask.” (This will be your “quick” pitch if you run into your Member on an elevator!)

During Your Visit:

✓ **Determine the amount of time the group will have with the Member/Aide.**

✓ **Introduce all members of the group** - Unless you’re an extremely large group, be sure every person has something to add to the discussion.

✓ **Stay on topic.** Keep the presentation simple and straightforward and present your issues briefly and persuasively.

✓ **Emphasize the District/State.**
  - Talk about local examples and the impact your work has in your community.
  - Relate a specific incident or story that describes the issue/proposal and how it will affect your district, business, the people you serve -- your community.

✓ **Be Specific.**
  - Have the specific bill/bill number/proposal with you that you want to discuss.
  - "The Ask" - Be specific about what you want your Member to do (e.g., sign letter to the President, cosponsor legislation, vote against/for a bill/proposal).
Post-Visit Checklist:

- Make sure your Member knows your future plans and what you expect from him or her.

**Post-Visit Checklist:**

1. **Have a follow-up plan to monitor progress and build a relationship.**
   - Send a thank you note for the meeting.
   - Send any relevant information requested during the meeting.
   - Add your Member to your mailing list (newsletters, press releases, invitations to local events).
   - Invite your Member to visit your agency or tour your facility.
   - Keep in touch regularly with your Member and send studies, reports and news items related to your program.

### General Do's and Don'ts of Lobbying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Don't</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Tell them you're a constituent or have programs that serve constituents</td>
<td>1. Make long speeches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demonstrate your broad community-based support</td>
<td>2. Ignore the staff - they have lots of knowledge and influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Be brief and listen respectfully</td>
<td>3. Don't be afraid to say &quot;I don't know.&quot; You can always research information and get back to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Find common ground</td>
<td>4. Be partisan or argumentative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Focus on specific issues/proposals, not vague goals</td>
<td>5. Forget to invite the Member to visit your program and follow-up after the meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Keep the long-term perspective</td>
<td>6. Forget “The Ask” during the meeting (be specific)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Tailor your remarks and presentation to the time allotted</td>
<td>7. Forget to thank the Member/Aide for their time, even if they don’t agree with your position – there’s always a next time!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Emailing Hill Staff:

Email addresses of House and Senate staff usually* follow the format below:

**House staff** – First name[dot]last name[at]mail[dot]house[dot]gov  
(e.g., Jane.Doe@mail.house.gov)

**Senate staff** – First name[underscore]last name[at]Senator’s last name[dot]senate[dot]gov  
(e.g., Jane_Doe@Lugar.senate.gov)

*Sometimes Committee staff use a slightly different format with the name of the committee in the email address (e.g., Jane_Doe@agriculture senate.gov).
Scheduling the Site Visit

Arranging a visit with your Member of Congress, or any elected official, requires flexibility and persistence. Just remember, elected officials enjoy meeting constituents and the positive publicity of touring a food assistance site. If you make your request multiple times through the appropriate channels and can accommodate the official’s busy schedule you stand an excellent chance of getting to host a visit.

- Make your invitation through your Member’s district office scheduler. Call your Member’s district office and ask to speak to the scheduler. Be ready to explain the work of your organization, the setting for the visit, and the policy concerns you want to discuss. The scheduler will likely ask that you put your request in writing. CAFB can provide a sample request letter.
- Be persistent. If you have a direct contact in the district or D.C. office also call and email them to make them aware of your invitation and ask that they help secure a visit. You will probably need to call your Member’s district office several times, possibly in addition to sending a letter, before you receive any commitment.
- Be flexible. The more opportunities you offer the Member to visit, the more likely he or she will be able to attend.

Finding the Perfect Site

It is important to select a site in a location that has easy access for reporters and your Member of Congress. Ideally, the food bank, pantry, or soup kitchen should provide high quality food that is in some way attributable to TEFAP or CSFP support. This would also apply to child nutrition sites. Choose a location where you will have access to a smaller, private space where you can speak to the Member of Congress uninterrupted for 5 to 15 minutes about your policy priorities and concerns.

As you plan your event, consider the following:

- Visit the site ahead of time – make sure you’re engaging site staff as partners in coordinating and taking part in the visit. Think about the picture your visitors will see. Make sure the site promotes your programmatic priorities. For example, if you are promoting funding for TEFAP, allow the Member to see how much TEFAP commodities have been reduced recently or have them meet the people who receive food through TEFAP. You can enhance the food sites with banners, posters, or hunger facts.
- If at a distribution, check the distribution menu ahead of time to ensure that the program will be serving healthy food that will be received enthusiastically during the visit.
- Pick a time and day for the visit when you know participation will be high. If Mondays typically have low participation, schedule the visit for later in the week.
- Schedule the visit so that your elected official and the media are present during the food distribution. Depending on the location, encourage your guest to participate and provide opportunities for them to directly engage with people receiving assistance.
Preparing for the Visit

The key to a successful site visit is to plan ahead so the event is well-organized and runs smoothly.

- A few weeks before the event, develop (or update) your media contact list. Include local media (print, radio and TV) that are likely to attend, state-wide media that may report on the event even without attending, and reporters from your state’s major papers.
- Create a press release for the event. CAFB can provide technical assistance or a template for you to use.
- Create a list of assignments so that everyone knows their responsibilities the day of the event.
- Work closely with congressional press staff to coordinate your media kits, press releases, materials, and quotes. Partnering with the Member’s district press secretary will often ease the burden on you since the office has many press contacts and the Representative generally will be looking for positive press from the visit.
- Also, determine how much time the Member will have at the site and provide a timeline for the event so that staff will know what to expect.
- Create a packet of background materials for your elected official. The packet should contain your press release, relevant fact sheets, brochures and outreach materials and any other helpful information.
- Identify a staff member in your organization to take pictures at the event and discuss ahead of time the images you are hoping to capture.
- Prepare volunteers and any regular clients in advance. Tell them about the visit and what they should expect that day. If possible, include them in the preparations and allow them to be involved in planning the event.

Crafting Your Message

Your elected official may not have a lot of time to spend at the site so you should prepare a succinct message.

- Research what issues are priorities for your elected official. For example, if he or she is particularly interested in Social Security or Medicare, focus on how federal nutrition support enables you to assist seniors.
- Sample message from August 2011 campaign:

  Federal nutrition programs enable our organization to provide critical nutritional support to low-income families. Food hardship in our community is at record levels, with __ in __ people (use local data) unable to afford enough food. Unfortunately, funding for critical programs like TEFAP, CSFP, and child nutrition program is at risk from deficit reduction measures and spending reductions. We cannot meet the rising need without these programs. Please work with us to protect federal nutrition programs from any cuts in federal deficit reduction measures or future appropriations.

Working with the Media

To maximize the impact of the visit, you want to get as much media attention as possible.

- If possible, schedule the visit earlier in the day. Television and newspaper reporters often have early afternoon deadlines for the evening news and thus prefer mornings.
- Alert the media as early as possible, preferably at least three days in advance of the visit. If your city is served by a news wire service, make sure that your event is listed in the daybook. Contact community newspapers, local television network affiliates, cable access channels and radio stations – they are likely to cover the visit.
- Assemble media kits for reporters. The kit should include your press release, fact sheets, and brochures. List the names of staff contacts and other organizations involved in the event, along with telephone and e-mail information.

Creating the Perfect Photo Op

- Ask your elected official if he or she would like to distribute food or serve meals.
- Make a special hat or apron for your guest to wear.
- Encourage your guest to sit and talk with clients while they eat or wait for their food package.
- Take a picture of your guest with people served by the site.
• Reporters should respect the privacy of individual clients and families at the site. If possible, identify a few clients willing to talk to reporters about the positive impact the food bank, food pantry, or soup kitchen services have had on their families.

**Discussing the Imperative to Protect Program Funding**

After your elected official has seen food assistance programs in action, create an opportunity for him or her to meet with key stakeholders privately to discuss protecting program funding and integrity in the federal budget and deficit-reduction processes. Stakeholders could include anti-hunger advocates, food bank staff, program sponsors, community leaders, and anyone else invested in protecting federal nutrition programs. This is an opportunity to discuss specific impacts funding reductions in these programs would have on your organization’s services. (Note: The media normally should not be present for this part of the event.)

After the event is over, remember to follow up with your elected official.

• Contact legislative staff to answer any questions and offer opportunities for follow-up activities, such as writing an article for a newsletter to constituents.
• Share any press coverage you receive with your elected official and publicize the event to your network.
• Place photos and articles about the visit on your website and in your newsletter.

**Utilizing CAFB as a Resource**

CAFB can be a resource for you as you plan your site visit. CAFB staff can provide sample invitation letters and media releases, as well as advice and assistance on planning the visit, talking points, and compiling local information on hunger. Every visit is unique and CAFB staff is prepared to help you make your visit a success. Contact Andrew Cheyne (510–350–9915 or andrew@cafoodbanks.org), or Sarah Palmer (510–350–9917 or sarah@cafoodbanks.org) for assistance in planning a visit from your Member of Congress. Please also keep CAFB policy staff informed of any visits you schedule with a Member during the August recess.
## Six Steps to Engage and Empower Clients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| 1. | Engage clients at point of service  
Ask them to sign a petition or a postcard  
Ask them to share their personal story via flipcam, email, postcard, letter  
Hang posters  
Register people to vote  
Hand out flyers |
| 2. | Find out which issues are most important to them as individuals  
Ask  
Survey  
Hold a focus group or listening session |
| 3. | Make participation easy  
Offer food, transportation, child care |
| 4. | Develop relationships with clients  
Visit with them for 20-30 minutes, ask them about themselves, their families, their interests |
| 5. | Provide opportunities for clients to “learn by doing”  
Bring them to a speak-out, public hearing, press conference, city council meeting, etc.  
Help them write their lines if they are speaking |
| 6. | Foster opportunities for clients to speak for themselves and make their own decisions  
Volunteer advisory committee  
Trust them to be the spokespeople at the public meetings |

**Some practical considerations**
- Get buy-in from your agency’s top leadership
- Know your agency’s rights under the 501(c)(3) laws
- Check confidentiality policies
- Allocate time in your busy day for advocacy
- You have to kiss a lot of frogs to find a prince – don’t be discouraged if not everyone is interested

**Final words**
- Service providers are trusted in the community
- Clients are the eyes and ears of the community
- Advocacy should be seen an extension of the mission to serve the poor
- Don’t be shy about asking people to get involved
Voting is an important way to build power in our communities and get the changes we need. We’re all strapped for time, but here are some easy ways to get our communities involved.

1. Make voter registration and education a part of your ongoing activities such as: membership enrollment; registration for programs; intake or exit interview processes. Add to your forms: “If you are not registered to vote where you now live, would you like to register today?”

2. Put up signs in your office announcing “Register to Vote Here” or “Election Information Here.”

3. Have voter registration forms and voter education materials available in your offices and at all meetings and events.

4. Have outreach workers do voter registration and education.

5. Get volunteers and clients to help.

6. Send out information in your newsletters and e-mails about voting. Include links and other resources for more information on the issues and where to register to vote.

7. Call your members or clients and remind them to vote. You can also give them election information at the same time, such as what important issues are on the ballot and where to find their polling place.

8. Have contests to see who can register or talk with the most voters. Use small gifts as prizes to make it fun.

9. Organize a community forum on issues that will be addressed in the election.

10. Talk to your peers in other community groups, and encourage them to involve their constituents in the democratic process.

For more information contact: Astrid Campos
at acampos@communitychange.org
A troubling picture of the economic devastation in the wake of the Great Recession emerges from economic data for 2010 released by the U.S. Census Bureau. More Americans than ever before -- 46.2 million -- are poor. The U.S. poverty rate of 15.1 percent is the highest it has been since 1993. Middle-class incomes have fallen to their lowest point since 1997.

The recession has taken a serious toll on our local community. Since the downturn's start in 2007, Second Harvest Food Bank has witnessed a nearly 50 percent increase in the number of people receiving food from us. The economy has forced many people who never thought they would need food assistance to ask for help. Many have worked hard their entire lives and now can't find permanent work. Increasingly, they are professionals who are unemployed or underemployed. They are our neighbors, our colleagues, our friends and our children's classmates.

As we head into the holidays, hundreds of local shelters, pantries and soup kitchens are depending on us to help stock their shelves so they can feed the growing number of hungry people. Second Harvest is feeding one in 10 people in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties -- a staggering number. Every time I share it with someone in the community, they gasp. But as the need continues to grow, we are seeing the hunger safety net crumble.

President Barack Obama and Congress have spent months attempting to shrink the deficit by identifying billions of dollars in budget cuts. Now the congressional supercommittee is supposed to cut $1.5 trillion more. Those of us in the anti-hunger community are deeply concerned about the drastic cuts proposed to federal programs like food stamps and child nutrition programs. One out of every four children in the nation is hungry. Cuts to these programs mean more children and families will go without enough food to eat, further eroding their ability to get back on their feet.

These pending cuts are in addition to reductions in the food commodities that organizations like Second Harvest receive from the federal government. This is a critical source of food, particularly at a time when food costs are at historic levels. Second Harvest is expecting a 40 percent cut this fiscal year, which will result in a loss of about 3 million pounds of food.

Despite the growing challenges, Second Harvest has been able to meet the increasing need. We are rethinking our approach to hunger relief, working to increase access to food stamps and dramatically improving our operational efficiency. But even with all that and the amazing support we receive from the community, we simply can't make up for these cuts.

Second Harvest is the second-largest provider of food in our community next to food stamps. We provide about 35 million meals each year. Even a 10 percent cut to these nutrition programs would require us to provide nearly 7 million more meals next year to make up the difference; we have neither the food nor the funds to do so.

Together we must take a stand and protect the hunger safety net.

This holiday season and beyond, please make a donation of your time, talent or money to a local effort to fight hunger. And while you act locally to support the hunger safety net, it's also important to try to influence federal policies that threaten our community. Let your representatives know you don't want to balance the budget by taking food out of the mouths of hungry people. Everyone should have access to healthy food to thrive because nothing else matters when you're hungry.

Kathy Jackson is Chief Executive Officer of Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties.
April 26 My Word: Cuts to food assistance for the poor are simply unacceptable

By Suzan Bateson
My Word Oakland Tribune
Posted 4/25/2012
http://www.insidebayarea.com/opinion/ci_20479935/april-26-my-word-cuts-it-food-assistance

In case you missed it, our elected officials voted recently to make more Americans go hungry -- denying reality, evading responsibility and spurning morality.

Charged with finding $42 billion in cuts to domestic programs, the House voted to cut $33 billion of food assistance from our nation's hungry -- children, seniors, working families and the disabled.

That's billion -- with a B.

Some who voted for this cut justify it by arguing that the nation's poor have food banks on which to rely.

Whether these statements are simply naive or maliciously misleading, one thing is certain: They're false.

The burden of $33 billion in federal assistance being shifted to a network of nonprofits is nothing short of preposterous.

That $33 billion is equal to the budget of nearly every food bank in America, many times over. This isn't a cut -- it's an amputation.

Long ago, we rejected the idea that anyone should go hungry in the richest country on Earth. If this cut takes effect, fewer families will be able to put food on the table; the quality of the food they have will decrease; and problems ranging from academic failure to malnutrition will increase nationwide.

And our neighborhood grocery stores? They will be out $33 billion, too, because that's where that assistance is spent.

But the message our representatives are sending is, "That's OK."

That's unacceptable.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program -- CalFresh in California, formerly known as food stamps -- is one of the most effective federal programs ever created. It lifts people out of poverty and provides a crucial bridge during hard times.

This recession has been long and hard on those already vulnerable. We've been incredibly lucky that our community has stepped up in great numbers to donate and volunteer to help us meet the need.

But our neighbors already line up for up to two hours for simple staples such as bread, potatoes and onions.

Nearly one in four children in America are fed by SNAP. Seniors face the choice between food and medicine. Parents are skipping meals so their children can eat. Food banks need more supply, not more demand.

There's a legitimate debate going on in Congress about whether millionaires should be required to pay a minimum tax rate -- meanwhile, our nation's poorest and most vulnerable are cast aside with little fanfare.

The American people deserve a budget that reflects our values. Seventy-seven percent of Americans believe that cutting SNAP is the wrong way to reduce spending.
We agree.

Congress is elected by us -- but many aren't living up to their one and only task of representing us. Let's make sure they don't get away with taking food off our neighbors' tables in the name of fiscal responsibility.

Susan Bateson is Executive Director of the Alameda County Community Food Bank.
California’s budget affirms our most important priorities. I’m counting on you to maintain the revenues we need to sustain the California we all want to live in!

Please be a champion for a budget that:

- Creates and maintains jobs!
- Preserves our health care!
- Invests in our schools!
- Gets families back to work!

Stand up for your constituents and SUPPORT maintaining current revenue streams to help get California working again!

Say YES to a Family Recovery Plan

Investing in programs that prevent hunger and provide other vital services, like Medi-Cal, CalWORKS, childcare, In-Home Supportive Services, Adult Day Health Care, and SSI/SSP, will help me and all Californians because:

Sincerely,

Name:

Address:

I’m counting on YOU to Pass a Budget that works for US!
For more information go to: www.hhsnetworkca.org
Survey on Most Impactful Lobbying Tactics

![Graph showing lobbying tactics and their impact](image-url)
Appendix B: Recommended Twitter Users to Follow

Below is a categorized introductory list of some useful people and organizations to follow on Twitter for policy and research updates related to hunger and poverty.

**State Organizations & Partners**
- California Association of Food Banks @CAFoodBanks
- California Budget Project @CABudgetProject
- California Food Policy Advocates @CAFoodPolicy
- Health & Human Services Network of California @HHSNetworkCA
- Western Center on Law & Poverty @Western_Center

**National Organizations**
- Center on Budget & Policy Priorities @CenterOnBudget
- Coalition on Human Needs @CoalitionHN
- Feeding America @FeedingAmerica
- Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) @fractweets

**Media Covering State & National Politics**
- Torey Van Oot, Sacramento Bee Capitol Alert @CapitolAlert
- Chris Megerian, Los Angeles Times @ChrisMegerian
- Ezra Klein, Washington Post @ezraklein
- Greg Kaufmann, The Nation @GregKaufmann

**California Food Banks**
- Alameda County Community Food Bank @ACCFB
- Amador-Tuolmne Community Action Agency @atcaaa
- Feeding America San Diego @FeedingSanDiego
- F.I.N.D (Food in Need of Distribution) Food Bank, Inc. @FindFoodBank
- Food Bank Coalition of San Luis Obispo @SLOFoodBank
- Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano @foodbankccs
- Food Bank of El Dorado County @FoodBankEDC
- Food Bank of Yolo County @YoloFoodBank
- Food for People, Inc. @FoodforPeople
- FOOD Share, Ventura County’s Food Bank @vcfoodshare
- Foodbank of Santa Barbara County @FoodbankSBC
- Foodlink of Tulare County @FoodLink_CA
- Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank @SDFoodBank
- Los Angeles Regional Foodbank @LAFoodBank
- Placer Food Bank @PlacerFoodBank
- Redwood Empire Food Bank @refb
- San Francisco Food Bank @SFFoodBank
- Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County @SecondHarvestFB
- Second Harvest Food Bank of San Joaquin & Stanislaus Counties @FightingHunger
- Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara & San Mateo Counties @2ndharvest
- Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Cruz County @SHFBSantaCruz
- Westside Food Bank @WsideFoodBank
Appendix C: Additional Resources

National, State, and Local Data on Hunger

Household Food Insecurity in the United States in 2010
United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service
http://ers.usda.gov/Publications/Err125/

State-level Analysis of USDA Data on Food Insecurity in 2010
Food Research and Action Center

Food Hardship Data (national, state, congressional districts)
Food Research and Action Center
http://frac.org/reports-and-resources/food-hardship-data/

Map the Meal Gap (national, state, county food insecurity data and cost of meeting food needs)
Feeding America

2010 County Nutrition and Food Insecurity Profiles
California Food Policy Advocates
http://cfpa.net/county-profiles-2010

Hunger among Hispanic Americans
Food Research and Action Center

Hunger among Black Americans
Food Research and Action Center

America’s Hunger Bill: The Cost of Hunger – Interactive Map
Center for American Progress

National, State, and Local Data on Federal Nutrition Programs

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) National and State Data
United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service

CalFresh Program Data Tables – State Data
California Department of Social Services
http://www.cdss.ca.gov/research/PG349.htm
National and State Data on Programs
Food Research and Action Center
http://frac.org/reports-and-resources/reports-2/

2010 Lost Dollars Empty Plates: The Economic Impact of CalFresh Participation
California Food Policy Advocates
http://cfpa.net/lost-dollars-empty-plates-2011

The SNAP Effect: Lifting Households Out of Poverty
Food Research and Action Center
http://org2.democracyinaction.org/o/5118/p/salsa/web/common/public/content?content_item_KEY=9402

Food Stamp Usage Across the Country – Interactive Map
The New York Times

**Advocacy Tools and Resources**

Worry-Free Lobbying for Nonprofits: How to Use the 501(h) Election to Maximize Effectiveness
Alliance for Justice
http://www.afj.org/assets/resources/resources2/Worry-Free-Lobbying-for-Nonprofits.pdf

Alliance for Justice Bolder Advocacy Initiative, Resources for Nonprofits
Bolder Advocacy
http://bolderadvocacy.org/

Ballot Measures and Public Charities: Yes, You Can Influence That Vote
Alliance for Justice

Voting & Election Resources for Nonprofits
Nonprofit VOTE
http://www.nonprofitvote.org/find-resources.html
The California Association of Food Banks (CAFB) represents 42 community food banks working to build a well-nourished California.