



ATLANTA COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

Policy Priorities 2017

The Atlanta Community Food Bank has a proud history of speaking up for policies and programs that address the crisis of food insecurity, help to end hunger and stabilize lives in our service area and the state of Georgia. In addition to our long-term strategic priorities, we monitor and inform the public about a range of hunger-related policy and legislative opportunities on an ongoing basis. We expect 2017 to be a period of significant change, and we are committed to stimulating and informing public dialogue about solutions to food insecurity at the state and federal level.

STATE OF GEORGIA

LEGISLATION AND BUDGET

Georgia Work Credit

The Georgia Work Credit is a proposal for an earned income tax credit for low-income, working Georgians. We support education and legislative outreach for the development and adoption of a refundable state earned income tax credit.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

We will oppose unnecessary barriers to enrollment and participation in SNAP. We support and promote adequate funding for the Department of Family and Children Services to reach all eligible households and assure their access to this important food program.

Tax Credit for Food Donations

We support and provide education on model state-level tax credits that create improved incentives for agricultural donations to Georgia's food banks and food pantries.

PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

Food Stamp Work Group

We convene stakeholders and SNAP program officials to facilitate communication, reach special populations, conduct ongoing needs assessment and elevate best practices. Implementation of the "Gateway" IT system, and re-imposition of time limits for able bodied adults without dependent children will be areas of focus.

WIC Working Group

With the Department of Public Health and community partners, we will coordinate research and education efforts to support optimal enrollment in this vital nutrition program for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and young children.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

LEGISLATION & BUDGET

Federal Nutrition Programs

We will work with our national partners to protect and strengthen federal nutrition programs through federal budget and spending legislation.

Farm Bill

Slated for renewal in 2018, Farm Bill discussions are beginning now. We seek a Farm Bill that provides resources to combat hunger through support for SNAP, The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and our food donation partnerships with the agriculture and food industries.

Anti-Poverty Proposals

We support poverty reduction programs that maintain or improve the safety net for food-insecure, vulnerable people.

Incentives for Charity

We will promote charitable tax deductions that facilitate increased giving to our network of food banks and partner agencies.

PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

SNAP Employment & Training Programs

As Georgia carries out the SNAP Works 2.0 education and job training pilot in 12 counties, we will monitor the impact upon program participants and highlight successes.

WIC Enrollment & Participation Strategies

Nationwide, enrollment in WIC has been declining. We support robust research and analysis to develop solutions that extend critical nutrition and education benefits to all eligible participants.

POLICY PRIORITIES 2017

BOLD GOAL: BY 2025, ALL HUNGRY PEOPLE IN OUR SERVICE AREA HAVE ACCESS TO THE NUTRITIOUS MEALS THEY NEED WHEN THEY NEED THEM

Atlanta Community Food Bank has launched a 10-year strategic plan to fulfill this bold goal. Assuring nutritious food for all requires systems much larger than the nonprofit sector alone can provide. Important government programs must also work efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of people who do not have enough to eat. In 2017 and beyond, the Food Bank will focus increased attention and advocacy on three critical programs that research shows are highly effective at eliminating food insecurity:

The Food Bank serves less than a quarter of Georgia's counties but more than half of the food-insecure people in our state.

Source: Feeding America: Map the Meal Gap 2016

» **WIC**

THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN, INFANTS & CHILDREN

This program provides nutrition education and food vouchers to pregnant and breastfeeding women and their children from birth through age five. The Food Bank is working with Georgia's Department of Public Health and the Georgia WIC Program to assure that WIC is able to reach food-insecure families and provide nutrition support that gets children off to a healthy start in life. Our first contribution is to convene a stakeholder working group to facilitate research, analysis and effective outreach programs.

» **SNAP**

THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Often better known as Food Stamps, SNAP benefits support food purchases for families and individuals living in poverty, the majority of whom have at least one person in the household who is working. Many senior citizens, veterans, and people with disabilities rely on SNAP to stretch their food dollar. Georgia has recently begun to re-impose time limits on SNAP for single adults. In collaboration with the quarterly Food Stamp Work Group, we will monitor the effect of the time limits and advocate for SNAP services.

» **GEORGIA WORK CREDIT**

A PROPOSED STATE-BASED EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT (S-EITC)

Twenty six states now have a state-based earned income tax credit linked to the federal EITC, and research shows that the credit effectively incentivizes work and helps to lift families out of poverty—permanently. We support efforts led by a Georgia Work Credit coalition to propose this tax benefit for Georgia and we will help to educate elected officials and the general public, as well as advocating for appropriate legislation that may arise.