



June 2024

**Purpose:** This document serves as a resource for GBFB’s advocacy community to support MEFAP and college hunger funding efforts in the FY25 state budget during June 2024.

**Background:** Conference Committee members – Chairman Michlewitz (D-Boston), Vice Chairwoman Ferrante (D-Gloucester), Representative Smola (R-Warren), Chairman Rodrigues (D-Westport), Chairwoman Friedman (D-Arlington), and Senator O’Connor (R-Weymouth)-- have been assigned to reconcile the House and Senate budget proposals. This year, the House budget provided \$37.1M (without earmarks) for the [MA Emergency Food Assistance Program \(MEFAP\)](#) and \$0 for the Hunger Free Campus Initiative, an effort that GBFB co-leads to bring resources to community colleges and state universities in MA. The Senate provided \$41.5M (without earmarks) for MEFAP and \$500,000 for the Hunger Free Campus Initiative. We are urging Conferees to include funding amounts for both initiatives that the Senate proposed.

**Timeframe:** The Conferees deliberate throughout June, with a soft deadline of June 30th that often extends into mid- to late July. **The sooner you can reach out, the better!** After the conferees release their budget proposal, the Governor has 10 days to veto or sign a final state budget.

**Action steps:** Please call and email your State Senator and State Representative to share these top two priorities for GBFB. Find their contact info [here](#). If your Senator or Representative is on the Conference Committee, all the more reason to advocate! You may change wording from asking your legislator to urge Conference Committee members to include the funding amounts to, “I am urging you to include these items in the Conference Committee budget.”

## 1. Phone call script

“Hello, this is a message for Representative/ Senator \_\_\_\_\_. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I live in \_\_\_\_\_. I’m calling to urge you to request that members of the Conference Committee include funding for priority hunger-relief policies:

- **\$41.5 million for the Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program (MEFAP).** This program provides healthy, free food to over 900 pantries, meal programs, and shelters that serve people in all 351 cities and towns in Massachusetts. Through MEFAP, the charitable food system can empower the growing number of neighbors struggling with the affordability crisis to keep healthy food on the table. Over half of MEFAP purchasing supports local farmers, food manufacturers, and food wholesalers and retailers in Massachusetts.
- **\$500,000 for the Hunger Free Campus Initiative** to ensure that the 44% of public and community college students facing food insecurity—our future workforce—can thrive.

Additionally, please consider strong funding for School Meals for All, the Healthy Incentives Program, and the Food Security Infrastructure Grant program.

<<add any info on why this matters to you>>

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. You can reach me at \_\_\_\_\_ with any questions.”

If you are asked a question that you don't know the answer to, feel free to reach out to Kate Adams, Sr. Public Policy Manager at GBFB at [kadams@gbfb.org](mailto:kadams@gbfb.org).

## 2. Email template (feel free to personalize):

Dear Senator/Representative \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I live in \_\_\_\_ . I'm reaching out to urge you to request that members of the Conference Committee include funding for priority hunger-relief policies:

- **\$41.5 million for the Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program (MEFAP).** This program provides healthy, free food to over 900 pantries, meal programs, and shelters that serve people in all 351 cities and towns in Massachusetts. Through MEFAP, the charitable food system can empower the growing number of neighbors struggling with the affordability crisis to keep healthy food on the table. Over half of MEFAP purchasing supports local farmers, food manufacturers, and food wholesalers and retailers in Massachusetts.

- **\$500,000 for the Hunger Free Campus Initiative** to ensure that the 44% of public and community college students facing food insecurity—our future workforce—can thrive.

Additionally, please consider strong funding for School Meals for All, the Healthy Incentives Program, and the Food Security Infrastructure Grant program.

Earlier this month, GBFB released its [fourth annual statewide hunger study](#), conducted in collaboration with Mass General Brigham, which found that 1 in 3 people struggle with food insecurity in our state. Community food providers in your district that receive food from GBFB have reported an increase in need due to neighbors struggling with the affordability crisis.

Thank you for your consideration of these budget items that will help families keep food on the table next year.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Your Name

Thank you for your advocacy! Please reach out to Kate Adams, Sr. Public Policy Manager at GBFB at [kadams@gbfb.org](mailto:kadams@gbfb.org) with any questions.