



December 4, 2025,

Governor Maura Healey and Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll
Massachusetts State House
24 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02133

Secretary Matthew Gorzkowicz
Executive Office for Administration and Finance
24 Beacon Street
State House, Room 373
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Healey, Lieutenant Governor Driscoll, and Secretary Gorzkowicz,

On behalf of the **Food Bank Coalition of Massachusetts (FBCMA)**, represented by the **Food Bank of Western Massachusetts (FBWMA)**, **The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB)**, **Merrimack Valley Food Bank (MVFB)**, and **Worcester County Food Bank (WCFB)**, thank you for your consistent and meaningful efforts to make Massachusetts a food-secure state. Your leadership on school meals for all, local food system initiatives, food security infrastructure, college hunger, bolstering emergency food providers, and developing a strategy in response to harmful federal nutrition cuts through convening the historic Anti-Hunger Task Force is reflective of your commitment to a hunger-free Massachusetts. **We share our deep gratitude to your Administration for safeguarding the flow of federal SNAP benefits to Massachusetts residents amid ongoing uncertainty at the federal level and for acting quickly to advance \$4 million for the Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program (MEFAP) to support our system during a time of great need.**

While the resumption of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and back pay for federal workers provides relief from a crisis that no one should have had to endure, our network is preparing for increased need. More than **300,000 residents will lose some or all of the help they currently receive to pay their health insurance if enhanced tax credits expire, with many facing premium increases of thousands of dollars every year, and Medicaid changes in FY27 will bar tens of thousands from accessing affordable care.** This will force families already struggling with food access to choose between healthcare and putting nutritious food on the table. As a result of HR.1, in the coming months, **up to 160,000**

legally present immigrants, veterans, caregivers, former foster youth, and older adults may lose SNAP benefits under new eligibility rules and work requirements—adding pressure to a charitable food system already stretched thin. Even before the shutdown and SNAP freeze, WCFB and FBWMA saw an 18 percent and 7 percent increase, respectively, in average people served monthly from 2023-2024 to 2024-2025. These increases are reflective of the findings in GBFB and Mass General Brigham’s [2025 Cost of Hunger in Massachusetts](#) study, which found food insecurity rose to 37 percent in 2024 from 34 percent in 2023.

For these reasons, the FBCMA respectfully requests your support to **fund MEFAP at \$58 million in the House 1 FY27 State Budget (line-item DAR 2511-0105).**

MEFAP supports over 1,000 local pantries, meal programs, and shelters, which receive, on average, more than a quarter of their food from MEFAP. In FY24, **over half of MEFAP funds were invested in local producers**¹, including Massachusetts farmers, food manufacturers, and fishermen—a testament to the program’s dual role in addressing food insecurity and stimulating the state’s economy.

The FBCMA urges the state to prioritize protecting SNAP, the most effective hunger-relief program, yet we know that is not enough. **Seventy-five percent of SNAP participants in Massachusetts reported needing additional food support, often relying on food pantries to meet monthly food needs**². There is a growing number of neighbors who are ineligible for federal nutrition benefits and are struggling to keep healthy food on the table. **Moreover, inflationary pressures make it harder for families at the grocery store and for our MEFAP food purchasing team:**³ and the average cost per pound for MEFAP food categories rose from \$0.82/lb. in FY24 to \$0.91/lb.⁴

As the FBCMA develops infrastructure for more effective regional emergency food distribution, we urge the Healey-Driscoll administration to continue investments in this critical program to meet the immediate needs of the 1 in 3 people facing food insecurity in our state.

With great appreciation,

Catherine D’Amato
President and CEO
The Greater Boston Food Bank

Jean McMurray
CEO
Worcester County Food Bank

Deb Callery
Executive Director
Merrimack Valley Food Bank

Andrew Morehouse
Executive Director
Food Bank of Western Massachusetts

CC: Commissioner Ashley Randle, Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

¹ [GBFB MEFAPFY24 V2a_040825_Final_Spreads.pdf](#)

² [GBFB Food-Access-Report_2025_final.pdf](#)

³ [Inflation ticked up in August; September Fed rate cut in play](#)

⁴ Data from GBFB’s Food Purchasing team.



Appendix: Food Bank Coalition of Massachusetts's Operational Response During the October – November 2025 Federal Government Shutdown

Food Bank of Western MA

- Purchased additional food, including dry goods and produce
- Added extra distributions to our Mobile Food Bank schedule and increased the pounds distributed at Mobiles by 82%
- increased our deliveries to agencies
- Worked with local municipalities and organizations that conducted food drives to get that food directly to our member food pantries and meal sites
- Increased warehouse staffing, which allowed us to offer extended hours for our member food pantries and meal sites to pick up food from us
- Received and processed a 115% increase in applications for our Brown Bag: Food for Elders program

The Greater Boston Food Bank

- Expanded warehouse operations and marketplace capacity, offering extended hours for community partners to pick up food from us
- Increased our capacity to receive food from our vendors to handle 75 more pallets of food per day
- Added additional produce and dry good options for our agency partners to order
- Enabled smaller pantries to order smaller partial pallets - extending flexibility for pick-ups
- Volunteers packed 10 more pallets each week of family meal boxes
- Launched 24 additional produce deliveries to high-need areas (Boston, Brockton, Lawrence, New Bedford, and Fall River)
- Absorbed all food, transportation, and labor costs to relieve pressure on our agency partners

Merrimack Valley FB

- Purchasing additional food – shelf stable and fresh produce
- Increasing the amount of food and number of distributions to the 34 schools that we serve
- Purchasing supermarket gift cards and distributing those to social workers, guidance counselors in Lowell Public Schools
- Offering emergency bags of food and a gift card to individuals who knock on our door (along with the schedule for the local pantries and meal programs)
- Increased the \$ amount of gift cards that we distribute at our 9 community markets and our senior feeding program (we typically provide a \$50 GC for Thanksgiving, and we upped it to \$100)

Worcester County Food Bank:

- Increasing the allocation of WCFB food products to Partner Agencies
- Purchasing more food and supermarket gift cards for distribution to our neighbors in all 60 communities of Worcester County through a network of 98 Partner Agencies.
- Donating 150,000 worth of supermarket gift cards to the United Response Fund for distribution to families through Worcester Public Schools and the Worcester Housing Authority.
- Distributing grants totaling \$165,000 to our Partner Agencies to enhance their resources and service following the federal government shutdown.