

# Outline of Key Recommendations, Ending Hunger in Maine, Final Report of the Maine Millennium Commission on Hunger and Food Security, April 2002

## Key Recommendations

1. The problem of hunger in Maine must be made central to a wide range of policy debates and decisions. It must become the policy of the State of Maine to end hunger.
2. Maine must take steps to achieve a living wage for all its citizens.
3. Maine must make structural changes in the food system to ensure locally produced food is more easily available to all citizens throughout the state and to increase local food consumption and to ensure that Maine makes measurable movement toward greater food self-reliance.
4. Maine must recognize that significant social and demographic changes have a profound effect on the nutritional needs of its citizenry. Maine must move toward a universal school nutrition program for all Maine children, begin to put in place the systems that will accommodate a growing elderly population as the baby boom reaches retirement age over the coming decades, and provide improved information on nutritional values and food preparation means compatible with the fast paced life styles of today's working households.
5. Maine must ensure a seamless system of services and programs for those who are in need by making sure that where the parameters and requirements of one program leave off, the eligibility for another takes up, closing all gaps through which populations in need may fall.
6. An Office of Food Security is necessary to coordinate the many fragmented activities that relate to ending hunger in Maine.

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## Specific Immediate Actions

1. Resolve to end hunger in Maine.
2. Establish an office of food security.
3. Increase the earned income tax credit and make it refundable.
4. Begin the move toward a school nutrition program available without cost to every child.
5. Institute a "free cart" program of breakfast or morning snacks in the schools immediately.
6. Make the school nutrition program an integral part of the educational process in Maine schools.
7. Ensure interim funding for the Senior FarmShare Program and expand the program to other low and moderate income households over a period of time.
8. Close loopholes in the state bid process and create opportunities for small businesses to improve opportunities and benefits for their workers.
9. Examine Maine's tax system to ensure that low-income households do not pay a disproportionate share.
10. Require all State agencies and departments to review their services and program guidelines to ensure a seamless system.

## Schneider, Deirdre

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**Subject:** FW: Child Food Insecurity

**From:** [tony@childhoodfoodsolutions.org](mailto:tony@childhoodfoodsolutions.org) [<mailto:tony@childhoodfoodsolutions.org>]

**Sent:** Monday, September 08, 2014 2:42 PM

**To:** Orbeton, Jane

**Cc:** Schneider, Deirdre

**Subject:** RE: Child Food Insecurity

Dear Jane and Deirdre,

Thank you for the invitation to the third meeting of the Task Force to End Student Hunger in Maine. I apologize for not attending.

I live in Ohio but would like to offer a Public Comment.

Our nonprofit, Childhood Food Solutions (CFS), has provided food to students in a poverty zip code since 2008. We focus on summer break and winter break food insecurity. Focusing on summer break, we have learned it is logistically impossible to reach a majority of students with USDA meals so we deliver food sacks in neighborhoods, funded by donations. We provide dry, grain-based groceries. In some homes, this is the only food; in others it enables caregivers to stretch their food budget and increase the intake of fresh items.

Because our food is handed out in neighborhoods, we know we are providing food for the whole family. This has a tremendous advantage for unborn children, especially those early in a pregnancy, before a mother goes to WIC and asks for other pregnancy support.

It is known that an enormous amount of physical, mental and emotional development takes place in the womb. Even knowing this, we were surprised and delighted to learn that the incidence of premature and low-weight births and infant mortality has dropped in the zip code where we have mastered the supply of summer and winter-break food support.

Although many factors affect birth outcomes, the scale of potential improvement is enormous. CFS has been investing \$100,000 in food support for the zip code and the reduced incidence of premature births (running at 25 fewer/year) is saving Medicaid about \$750,000 a year. The medical community is skeptical so we are seeking a larger scale test.

The first step for Maine would be to commit to funding what would essentially be an extension of the National School Lunch Program to cover summer and winter break. The food would be in the form of sacks of groceries that provide grain-based caloric support for about 15% of meal costs.

I would very much like to continue this discussion with your task force.

Kind regards,  
Tony

CFS therefore sees a need for legislation to expand the National School Lunch Program to reimburse the "calories in a sack" approach when meal programs are reaching too few of the eligible students.

I believe we need a bold approach because food-insecure students fall behind in their physical, mental, and emotional development on non-school days, especially during the summer, and this impedes their ability to become healthy and productive citizens.

Kind regards,

Tony

Anthony J. Fairhead  
Executive Director  
Childhood Food Solutions  
513-910-4162

## Schneider, Deirdre

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**From:** tony@childhoodfoodsolutions.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 20, 2014 10:04 PM  
**To:** Study - Student Hunger  
**Subject:** Comment from Tony Fairhead on the Study to End Student Hunger

The Portland Press Herald reported that "During the summer months, most of those [food-insecure] students are left without access to regular, nutritious meals." We have the same situation in Cincinnati, Ohio.

My nonprofit organization, Childhood Food Solutions (CFS), was founded with the mission of providing food to food-insecure children on non-school days. We tried promoting the USDA summer lunch program, but could not come close to replacing the number of meals normally provided by schools. This caused us to seek a way to provide lunch equivalents - we provide the grain-based component of a normal school lunch and call it "calories in a sack". For convenience, each sack contains about a two-week supply.

As we distribute our last "calories in a sack" tomorrow, CFS will have provided about 60 million calories (150,000 lunch equivalents) for the summer. We go into the neighborhoods and the vast majority of our sacks are placed into the hands of children or into the hands of parents or guardians at the homes of the children.

Cincinnati has been less successful providing conventional USDA lunches. The Cincinnati Public School District served USDA lunches at 91 sites over the summer, but only recorded 114,439 meals served. They will be reimbursed over \$350,000 by USDA for these meals but they only reached about 10% of eligible students. CFS, on the other hand, focused on the poverty area served by 6 schools and delivered lunch equivalents to 60-80% of the students at about one-tenth the cost of a USDA lunch reimbursement.

We are not where we want to be. Our volunteers guess which neighborhoods contain most students. We see the schools as being in the ideal position to approach 100% success because they have the advantage of knowing who the students are and where they live.

CFS therefore sees a need for legislation to expand the National School Lunch Program to reimburse the "calories in a sack" approach when meal programs are reaching too few of the eligible students.

I believe we need a bold approach because food-insecure students fall behind in their physical, mental, and emotional development on non-school days, especially during the summer, and this impedes their ability to become healthy and productive citizens.

Anthony J. Fairhead  
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