

1 AN ACT concerning hunger.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the  
5 Commission to End Hunger Act.

6 Section 5. Legislative findings. It is the goal of the  
7 State of Illinois that no man, woman, or child should ever be  
8 faced with hunger.

9 Despite being one of the wealthiest nations and the largest  
10 agricultural producer in the world, the United States is a  
11 country with pervasive hunger and Illinois is not exempt from  
12 this reality. In Illinois, hunger is less a story of starvation  
13 and more one of hunger and access, of individuals and families  
14 simply not having access to enough healthful, nutritious food.  
15 The number of families facing food emergencies is growing.  
16 Requests for emergency food assistance grew by an estimated 30  
17 percent nationally in 2009 alone.

18 The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), which  
19 defines food security as "access by all people at all times to  
20 enough nutritious food for an active, healthy life," also  
21 estimates that between 2006 and 2008, 11.1 percent of Illinois  
22 households experienced food insecurity. Nearly 1/3 of those  
23 households were considered very food insecure. It is important

1 to note that the USDA numbers only reflect what was taking  
2 place between 2006 and 2008. Since then, the economy has  
3 significantly weakened, and there are likely many more people  
4 struggling with hunger than what the USDA report states.

5 When examining hunger in the region, participation levels  
6 in existing nutrition programs are an indicator of the level of  
7 need in the community. However, many nutrition programs are  
8 underutilized by the families and individuals that need them,  
9 so while examining program participation data, it is important  
10 to keep in mind that this likely underrepresents the true need  
11 in the community. It is estimated that only 79 percent of  
12 Illinoisans eligible for SNAP benefits were enrolled as of  
13 2006.

14 The School Breakfast Program (School Breakfast) and the  
15 Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), two child-focused  
16 programs, are also underutilized. Illinois currently ranks  
17 51st amongst all states and the District of Columbia in  
18 enrollment for free and reduced priced school breakfasts.  
19 Illinois earned this bottom ranking because less than 33% of  
20 eligible children (those who receive free and reduced lunch)  
21 are also accessing School Breakfast. According to a report  
22 released by the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC),  
23 increasing School Breakfast participation in Illinois to just  
24 60% would yield an additional \$42,655,714 in federal funds and  
25 would result in 189,668 more children receiving breakfast  
26 everyday. Likewise, increasing the participation rate in the

1 SFSP to just 40% would result in Illinois receiving over \$9.2  
2 million in additional federal funds and in thousands of  
3 children continuing to have access to breakfast or lunch, or  
4 both, during the summer months.

5 Opportunities exist in several areas to eliminate barriers  
6 preventing individuals from accessing quality, nutritious food  
7 and achieving food security. Promoting health and wellness  
8 through nutrition education, coordination of services, and  
9 access to nutrition programs is one such opportunity that can  
10 help Illinois residents achieve food security. Establishing a  
11 statewide Commission to End Hunger will guarantee  
12 cross-collaboration among government entities and community  
13 partners and is essential to eliminating these barriers and  
14 ensuring that no man, woman, or child in Illinois should ever  
15 be faced with hunger.

16 Section 10. Creation of the Commission to End Hunger.

17 (a) The General Assembly authorizes the Department of Human  
18 Services to create the Commission to End Hunger.

19 (b) The purpose of the Commission to End Hunger shall be to  
20 develop an action plan every 2 years, review the progress of  
21 this plan, and ensure cross-collaboration among government  
22 entities and community partners toward the goal of ending  
23 hunger in Illinois.

24 (c) Key duties of the Commission shall include the  
25 following:

1           (1) Identify all funding sources which can be used  
2           toward improving nutrition and ending hunger, for which the  
3           State has administrative control, and develop  
4           recommendations for future funding.

5           (2) Identify barriers to access and develop  
6           sustainable policies and programs to address those  
7           barriers.

8           (3) Promote and facilitate public-private  
9           partnerships.

10          (4) Develop benchmarks and set goals to indicate  
11          success.

12          (5) Report to the Governor and the General Assembly on  
13          progress.

14          Section 15. Members. The Commission to End Hunger shall be  
15          composed of no more than 21 voting members including 2 members  
16          of the Illinois House of Representatives, one appointed by the  
17          Speaker of the House and one appointed by the House Minority  
18          Leader; 2 members of the Illinois Senate, one appointed by the  
19          Senate President and one appointed by the Senate Minority  
20          Leader; one representative of the Office of the Governor  
21          appointed by the Governor; one representative of the Office of  
22          the Lieutenant Governor appointed by the Lieutenant Governor;  
23          and 15 public members, who shall be appointed by the Governor.

24          The public members shall include 2 representatives of food  
25          banks; 2 representatives from other community food assistance

1 programs; a representative of a statewide organization focused  
2 on responding to hunger; a representative from an anti-poverty  
3 organization; a representative of an organization that serves  
4 or advocates for children and youth; a representative of an  
5 organization that serves or advocates for older adults; a  
6 representative of an organization that advocates for people who  
7 are homeless; a representative of an organization that serves  
8 or advocates for persons with disabilities; a representative of  
9 an organization that advocates for immigrants; a  
10 representative of a municipal or county government; a  
11 representative of a township government; and 2 at-large  
12 members. The appointed members shall reflect the racial,  
13 gender, and geographic diversity of the State and shall include  
14 representation from regions of the State.

15 The following officials shall serve as ex-officio members:  
16 the Secretary of Human Services or his or her designee; the  
17 State Superintendent of Education or his or her designee; the  
18 Director of Healthcare and Family Services or his or her  
19 designee; the Director of Children and Family Services or his  
20 or her designee; the Director of Aging or his or her designee;  
21 and the Director of Agriculture or his or her designee. The  
22 African-American Family Commission and the Latino Family  
23 Commission shall each designate a liaison to serve ex-officio  
24 on the Commission.

25 Members shall serve without compensation and are  
26 responsible for the cost of all reasonable and necessary travel

1 expenses connected to Commission business, as the State of  
2 Illinois will not reimburse Commission members for these costs.

3 Commission members shall be appointed within 60 days after  
4 the effective date of this Act. The Commission shall hold their  
5 initial meetings within 60 days after at least 50% of the  
6 members have been appointed.

7 The representative of the Office of the Governor and a  
8 representative of a food bank shall serve as co-chairs of the  
9 Commission.

10 At the first meeting of the Commission, the members shall  
11 select a 5-person Steering Committee that includes the  
12 co-chairs.

13 The Commission may establish committees that address  
14 specific issues or populations and may appoint individuals with  
15 relevant expertise who are not appointed members of the  
16 Commission to serve on committees as needed.

17 The Office of the Governor, or a designee of the Governor's  
18 choosing, shall provide guidance to the Commission. Under the  
19 leadership of the Office of the Governor, subject to  
20 appropriation, the Department of Human Services shall also  
21 provide leadership to support the Commission. The Department of  
22 Human Services and the State of Illinois shall not incur any  
23 costs as a result of the creation of the Commission to End  
24 Hunger as the coordination of meetings, report preparation, and  
25 other related duties will be completed by a representative of a  
26 food bank that is serving as a co-chair of the Commission.

1           Section 20. Meetings and reports. The full Commission shall  
2 meet at least twice annually. The Steering Committee shall meet  
3 at least quarterly.

4           The Commission shall issue an interim report on its  
5 activities and recommendations to the constitutional officers  
6 and to the General Assembly no later than 12 months from the  
7 date of the first Commission meeting.

8           A work plan shall be adopted by the Commission not later  
9 than 12 months from the date of the first Commission meeting  
10 and sent to the constitutional officers and to the General  
11 Assembly. Following the adoption of the initial work plan, the  
12 Commission shall continue to meet and issue annual reports  
13 regarding progress on the goal of ending hunger in Illinois and  
14 on the implementation of the work plan.

15           Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
16 becoming law.