



COMMISSION *to*  
END HUNGER

2013  
REPORT



## ILLINOIS COMMISSION TO END HUNGER

### **GOVERNOR QUINN AND MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:**

On behalf of the members of the Commission to End Hunger and its working groups, it is our pleasure to report the activities and achievements for 2012. The activities and achievements outlined in this report are a testament to the dedication and commitment shown by the public and private sectors, organizations and individuals, who partnered with the Commission and embraced the goals of the 2012 Action Plan.

The Commission was created by legislation in 2010 to develop a statewide action plan to measurably reduce hunger in Illinois. We believe that no man, woman or child should ever be faced with hunger. While progress has been made, we have a long road ahead before we can declare an end to hunger in Illinois.

Since the release of the Action Plan:

- The No Kid Hungry Campaign was launched as a public-private partnership to end childhood hunger in Illinois.
- Participation in the School Breakfast Program by low income children increased over 15%.
- The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) served an additional 172,800 meals to children 18 and under during the summer of 2012.
- Feeding Illinois and the Illinois Department of Human Services worked collaboratively to increase efficiencies in The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) passing the savings to Illinois' food banks to serve more in need.

These highlights, along with the others outlined in this update, are witness to the organizations and individuals who have worked collaboratively across sectors. Investments from private philanthropy including the national anti-hunger organization Share Our Strength and local funder, the Chicago Community Trust, provided the necessary resources to implement many of the recommendations. But our work is far from over and the need continues to increase, requiring the continued investment from the public and private sectors.

Nearly two million Illinoisans, including 684,000 children, face food insecurity - not knowing where their next meal will come from. Food insecurity is being felt in every county of Illinois and will have a significant impact on the health and economic well-being of our residents for years to come.

As the Commission and its members continue to implement the recommendations laid out in the Action Plan, we need your support. Work with us to expand access to federal nutrition programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps), School Breakfast, and Summer Food Service Program by being the champion in your district. Connect individuals in need with their local food bank and pantry. Collaborate with us to build the necessary infrastructure and increase efficiency so our state can meet the needs of its residents tomorrow and in the year to come. Together, we can have a Hunger Free Illinois!

**Cristal Thomas**

*Co-Chair*

*Deputy Governor*

*Office of Governor Patrick Quinn*

**Kate Maehr**

*Co-Chair*

*Executive Director & CEO*

*Greater Chicago Food Depository*

## COMMISSION TO END HUNGER'S ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Commission to End Hunger was created by legislation in 2010 to guarantee collaboration among government entities and community partners in order to ensure that no man, woman, or child in Illinois should ever experience hunger. The Commission was appointed by Governor Quinn in March of 2011 and was charged with the task of developing an aggressive and achievable action plan every two years that would measurably reduce hunger in Illinois.

Through the work of the three standing workgroups - Children and Families at Risk (renamed the No Kid Hungry Committee), Vulnerable Adults, and Underserved Populations, as well as the Commission's Steering Committee - members engaged with a broad base of knowledgeable partners. To develop the Action Plan, the Commission engaged individuals throughout the state by holding monthly workgroup meetings and attending eight listening tour stops, arranging for members to have a caseworker for a day sessions, arranging visits to nutrition programs, hosting full Commission and Steering Committee meetings, and receiving recommendations from key state agencies.

The Commission's Action Plan was adopted by the members and presented to Governor Quinn and the General Assembly members on March 14, 2012. The four overarching goals of the Action Plan are:

**GOAL 1: End hunger by improving access to quality, nutritious food among all Illinois populations**

**GOAL 2: Build needed state infrastructure and foster communication and collaboration among government programs and agencies**

**GOAL 3: Create public awareness of hunger and the solutions**

**GOAL 4: Build and expand collaborative partnerships between the public and private sector to implement the Commission goals**

Since the release of the Action Plan, the full Commission, Steering Committee and Work Groups have continued to meet to develop the strategies and build the momentum to achieve the four goals. In April of 2013, the Commission brought together over 250 individuals representing the public and private sectors for a Hunger Summit in Springfield.

At the Summit, Commission members provided participants with an update to the work accomplished in year one and received feedback to shape the work for year two. Next year's goals for implementation of the action plan are listed at the end of this document.



## STORY FROM THE COMMUNITY

In the summer of 2012, the Illinois No Kid Hungry Campaign partnered with the Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI) organization to have Parent “Food” Ambassadors do door-to-door outreach in hard-to-reach, at-risk neighborhoods in Chicago. For six weeks, the food ambassadors knocked on over 4,900 doors, went to local businesses, and attended festivals to let families know about summer meals sites in their neighborhood. They spoke to over 2,400 people. Daisy Rivera, one of the food ambassadors, retold this story about the importance of door-to-door outreach:

*“A mother came to the door and said, ‘I don’t know what I would’ve done if you hadn’t come.’ She was recently separated, cut off food stamps, had been in a car accident, and didn’t have a car or money. We gave her the flyers. She was crying.... She thanked us for the information. She had been laid off, didn’t have a car to take her kids to school. It was rewarding... to know we made a difference.”*

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## **GOAL 1:** End hunger by improving access to quality, nutritious food among all Illinois populations

### **SUB-GOAL 1:** END HUNGER AND IMPROVE NUTRITION AMONG CHILDREN IN ILLINOIS

#### **ACHIEVEMENTS:**

- Launched the Illinois No Kid Hungry Campaign in partnership with Share Our Strength.
- During the 2011-2012 school year, over 349,000 low-income children participated in the school breakfast program, an increase of 15.9% over the 2010-2011 school year.
- The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) served an additional 172,800 meals to children 18 and under during the summer of 2012.

#### **ACTIVITIES:**

##### **School Breakfast**

- Through the support of private philanthropy, four School Breakfast Grants were awarded to organizations to employ full-time breakfast coordinators. These coordinators will be working with targeted school districts to implement best practice models to increase participation in school breakfast.
- Held two School Breakfast Summits, in partnership with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and Midwest Dairy Council, attended by over 175 individuals from schools around the state to encourage adoption of alternative breakfast models to increase participation.
- Launched the Governor's Breakfast Challenge in partnership with the Midwest Dairy Council to provide awards to the schools with the largest increase in breakfast participation.
- In partnership with Share Our Strength, \$15,000 was awarded to schools to assist in their expansion of the School Breakfast Program.

##### **Summer Food Service Program**

- Held the first-ever statewide Summer Food Summit – in partnership with ISBE, Illinois Hunger Coalition and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)- attended by 100 individuals to build collaboration and communication between SFSP sponsors to increase the number of meals served to children in 2013.
- In partnership with Share Our Strength, awarded over \$51,000 in grants to ten organizations to support expansion of the SFSP programs.
- Developed uniform statewide outreach materials for SFSP to increase recognition of the program.
- Launched a texting platform and website dedicated to SFSP allowing families to easily access their local summer food program.
- Piloted a parent “food ambassador” outreach model in partnership with Communities Organizing and Family Issues (COFI). The food ambassadors went door to door in three Chicago neighborhoods to inform families and community leaders of the SFSP program.

**SUB-GOAL 2: END HUNGER AND IMPROVE NUTRITION AMONG VULNERABLE ADULTS (OLDER ADULTS, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, THE CHRONICALLY ILL, THE HOMELESS AND VETERANS)**

**ACTIVITIES:**

- Worked to identify the distinct food insecurity challenges of each vulnerable population identified in the Action Plan. Consulted with experts and practitioners from the social service networks serving vulnerable adults to gain their insight into the barriers preventing eligible vulnerable adults from accessing the SNAP program.
- Researched possible SNAP program options and waivers that could be implemented to increase access to SNAP for vulnerable populations and increase efficiency.
- Identified a validated two-question screening tool for distribution to organizations serving vulnerable populations. This is part of our developing strategy for attaining greater utilization of food and nutrition programs through collaborations with social service organizations and health care providers that serve vulnerable adult populations.
- Promoted the Commission’s Action Plan and work group with partner organizations by participating in presentations and webinars.

**SUB-GOAL 3: END HUNGER AND IMPROVE NUTRITION AMONG ALL UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS (IMMIGRANTS, MIGRANT WORKERS, WORKING POOR, INDIVIDUALS INELIGIBLE FOR FEDERAL NUTRITION PROGRAMS, AND INDIVIDUALS LIVING IN RURAL COMMUNITIES)**

**ACHIEVEMENT:**

- Feeding Illinois (Illinois’ food bank association) and the Illinois Department of Human Services worked collaboratively to identify efficiencies and develop and implement new protocols and procedures for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP ). Through these efforts, additional financial resources will be provided to food banks to meet their growing demand.

**ACTIVITIES:**

- A small work group of food bank members and IDHS staff worked collaboratively to find efficiencies within the TEFAP program. The work group has developed and is implementing new protocols and procedures.
- Surveyed the Illinois Farmers Markets Association members and the Feeding Illinois members and their food pantry agency to obtain information concerning partnership between farmers markets and food banks/pantries. The information gleaned from the survey will aid in developing a toolkit to aid in building collaborations.

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## **GOAL 2:** Build needed state infrastructure and foster communication and collaboration among government programs and agencies

### **ACHIEVEMENTS:**

- IDHS staff and Feeding Illinois members engaged in a collaborative process to examine TEFAP and make recommendations for improvements.
- Illinois Fresh Food Fund, under the director of IFF and the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, are working to bring grocery stores to underserved areas.

### **ACTIVITIES:**

- Developed a white paper researching agricultural surplus programs that have been implemented in other states as possible models for Illinois.
- The state is leveraging federal funding to develop and implement new technology—a new Integrated Eligibility System (IES) – that will provide customers improved online access and service while also providing both IDHS and HFS with an efficient, modern system that will allow the state to more efficiently and accurately service customers.
- In partnership with the IDHS Office of Grants Administration, the Division of Family & Community Services has secured significant grant funding to develop and implement innovative approaches to better providing Illinoisans access to work support programs that can both help meet their basic needs and help them to achieve self-sufficiency.
- After participating in a one-year planning phase, Illinois was selected to receive three years of Work Support Strategies implementation funding totaling \$1.5 million. This funding is supporting a breadth of work focused on improving business processes in Family Community Resource Centers (FCRCs). The funding is also supporting work to streamline and align policy across programs in order to reduce confusion for customers and workers. Illinois has also received a three-year SNAP Process and Technology Improvement grant from the USDA to support business process improvements in the IDHS FCRCs that will help improve SNAP service delivery.

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## **GOAL 3:** Create public awareness of hunger and the solutions

### **ACHIEVEMENTS:**

- The Commission held the first Hunger Summit attended by over 250 individuals throughout Illinois representing a variety of public and private organizations.
- Through funding from the Chicago Community Trust, the first-ever statewide family focused website was developed to raise awareness of the Summer Food Service Program.
- With support from Share Our Strength a texting platform was developed to allow parents to text FOODIL to 877877 and receive the three closest SFSP sites to their location.
- Partnered with national partners Share Our Strength, Food Research & Action Center (FRAC), and Bread for the World to activate groups around the state to mobilize around the documentary “A Place at the Table.”

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## GOAL 4: Build and expand collaborative partnerships between the public and private sector to implement the Commission goals

### ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Launched the Illinois No Kid Hungry Campaign along with local, state and national partners.
- Engaged private philanthropy to support the No Kid Hungry Campaign's School Breakfast Project to leverage the investment by Share Our Strength.
- Engaged numerous new public and private partners including the Midwest Dairy Council and the Chicago Community Trust to invest in the recommendations in the Action Plan.

### NEXT STEPS

Building on the activities and achievements of year one, during year two the Commission members and work groups will:

- Work with the School Breakfast Coordinators to expand school breakfast to more schools.
- Expand the grants available to schools and community organizations to support expansion of school breakfast and summer feeding throughout Illinois.
- Engage stakeholders in developing a School Breakfast public awareness campaign.
- Build a coalition of organizations and individuals to investigate developing an agricultural surplus program for Illinois to optimize agricultural outputs for Illinois farmers and providing fresh produce for the food banks and pantries throughout Illinois.
- Complete a toolkit for outreach between Farmers Markets and food banks/pantries.
- Provide awareness materials of farmers markets that participate in the Electronic Benefits Technology for SNAP benefits to food pantries for referral for the clients.
- Work with the Illinois Department of Human Services to examine possible SNAP options and waivers to reduce barriers older Americans face in accessing SNAP.
- Engage partners and identifying resources to increase the capacity of referral networks to promote awareness of federal nutrition programs for vulnerable populations.