

2018 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES AGENDA

THE CHAPIN CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY OF LONG ISLAND CARES determines the advocacy priorities for Long Island Cares, Inc.—The Harry Chapin Food Bank. We frequently support legislation which increases access to nutritious food for the diverse populations we serve through both our dedicated network of 390 member agencies and our own array of innovative direct service programs.

Realizing that hunger in America, and especially on Long Island, is an extremely complex multi-tiered societal issue, we also advocate for legislation which addresses and attempts to remedy the root causes of hunger, such as poverty and unemployment. As we are all too sadly aware, food insecurity is inextricably tied to income insecurity, and therefore, it is our duty to go on record supporting legislation which preserves access to critical social service programs and promotes vocational/job training services for the populations (veterans, seniors, and the homeless) benefitting from our services. Conversely, we oppose legislation which makes life tougher for the people we collaboratively serve by denying or lessening their critical services and benefits. In recent years, Long Island Cares, Inc. has evolved into a humanitarian organization utilizing nutrition services as a vehicle for economic empowerment to not only improve the quality of life for our agencies and clients served, but to holistically uplift the region by improving the quality of life for all Long Islanders by providing for those among us currently struggling to make ends meet.

ABOUT LONG ISLAND CARES

LONG ISLAND CARES, INC.—The Harry Chapin Food Bank is Long Island's first food bank and the region's most comprehensive hunger action organization. Founded in 1980 by the late singer, songwriter and social activist, Harry Chapin, the mission of Long Island Cares is to bring together all available resources for the benefit of the hungry on Long Island and to provide to the best of our ability for the humanitarian needs of our community. Our goals are to provide emergency food where and when it is needed, sponsor a wide variety of innovative direct service programs that help families achieve self-sufficiency and educate the general public about the causes and consequences of hunger. Today, Long Island Cares is led by his wife and partner Sandy Chapin, a dedicated Board of Directors, and talented staff working out of their 35,000 sq. ft. facility in Hauppauge and three storefront service centers in Freeport, Lindenhurst, and Huntington Station. The organization provides nutritional food and support services for a network of more than 390 community-based member agencies including food pantries, soup kitchens, emergency shelters, child care programs, senior nutrition sites, disability organizations, veterans' services and more. While the annual distribution of greater than 6.7 million pounds of nutritional food is at the heart of Long Island Cares' operations, we also provide a broad array of programs and services including hunger education, vocational and job training, supplemental food programs for children, the provision of new school supplies, job development, legislative advocacy, and on-site triage food pantries.

LOCATIONS

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BECAUSE IT TAKES MORE THAN FOOD TO FEED THE HUNGRY



2018 Legislative Priorities Agenda

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Our Top Priorities for 2018

FEDERAL

- Support the reintroduction of the **Food Bank Assistance Act of 2017, H.R. 4020**, which would increase funding for **The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)** commodities to \$500 million and mandate full funding, \$100 million, for storage and distribution costs.
- Oppose cuts or structural changes to the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** which greater than 60% of our clients utilize combined with support services from the food bank and its agency base to sustain themselves and their families.
- Oppose the recently passed **Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, H.R. 1**, because the bill provides few tax benefits for low and middle income households, increases the deficit by over \$1.5 trillion over a decade, and places downward pressure to cut future spending from critical programs like SNAP. This legislation also takes direct aim at food banks and non-profits by diminishing the effectiveness of charitable giving deductions, denying food banks like Long Island Cares, Inc. the resources needed to best serve their communities.
- Support the creation of **new housing models and programs** for Long Island's diverse population of veterans, seniors, the disabled, and LGBTQ to lessen homelessness on Long Island. We hope these programs include combined collaborative services and opportunities for vocational training where applicable.
- Oppose any proposed reforms to health care which increase the costs of premiums and prescription medications and also decrease access to coverage for millions of Americans. Specifically, we oppose any proposed cuts to **Medicaid and Medicare** which serve to fund many of the agencies we support and also is the sole source of coverage for so many of our clients.
- Support increased **funding for federal nutrition programs** including child nutrition programs (i.e.

National School Lunch and Farm to School), WIC, and child care tax credits.

- Support increased funding for **HUD's McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants**. Each month, our homeless outreach vehicle delivers emergency food to 400+ homeless individuals.
- Support increased federal support for **Meals on Wheels and 21st Century Community Learning Centers**. This assistance not only helps the intended client, but it also makes it easier for parents and caregivers to be productive at work and school.
- Support the continuation of **DACA** and the passage of responsible immigration reform that will allow for safety, security, and access to employment opportunities for young adults who arrived to the United States as children.

STATE

- Support the preservation of **Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP)** funding at \$34.5 million. For more than 30 years, HPNAP has provided state and federal funds to improve the quality of food distributed to an estimated 2,500 Emergency Food Relief Organizations (EFRO) in New York State. These EFROs include food banks, such as Long Island Cares, Inc., which have provided greater than 239 million meals each year to New Yorkers in need. As the regional food bank for Long Island, entrusted by the State's Department of Health, we administer this program for Suffolk and Nassau Counties.
- Support the expansion of the Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP), to include the creation of **"seed grants"** to incentivize food banks to develop innovative services (mobile outreach units, community gardens, and nutrition education programs) in their respective regions.
- Support the gradual increase of **minimum wage** statewide to \$15 per hour which will lift the earnings of more than 2 million New Yorkers, and thus decrease food insecurity across the state.



- Support Governor Cuomo's proposed **"No Student Goes Hungry"** Program which is a five-point plan focusing upon: banning lunch shaming statewide (S.6444/A.7376); requiring breakfast after the bell; expanding the Farm to School Program; increasing the use of farm-fresh, locally grown foods at school; and developing food pantries on all SUNY campuses.
- Support continued relief and support for a post **Hurricane Maria Puerto Rico**. Our Puerto Rico relief efforts have raised over 200,000 pounds of food, water, personal care products, and cleaning supplies. This was shipped to Puerto Rico in conjunction with the Governor's Office and facilitated by the NYS National Guard.
- Support increased efforts to combat the **heroin and opioid epidemic** crisis in New York State by increasing access to treatment, expanding community prevention strategies, and limiting the over-prescription of opioids.
- Support proposed efforts to transform the Long Island Rail Road, which includes the development of a **Main Line Third Track**, Double Track, Jamaica Station Reconstruction, 39 renovated Long Island Rail Road stations, and grade crossing eliminations. This modernization of our transportation system provides jobs now, incentivizes more Long Islanders to work in New York City (NYC) in the future, and even encourages reverse commuting from NYC to Long Island.
- Support the redevelopment of **Belmont Park** and the return of the New York Islanders to Nassau County. This immense development project will strengthen our regional economy, drive tourism, and stimulate local businesses.

SUFFOLK & NASSAU COUNTIES

- We congratulate new **Nassau County Executive Laura Curran** on her new role and look forward to collaborating with her and the County to lessen hunger and expand access to social services.
- Support Suffolk County entrusting us with the responsibility of purchasing emergency food, household supplies, and personal care products on behalf of the **Suffolk County Department of Social Services (DSS)**. Examples of products we purchase on behalf of the County include infant formula, diapers, and various lean proteins. These goods are distributed to people accessing services at 8 different DSS offices located throughout Suffolk County.
- Support continued investment in transit oriented development projects, such as the **Ronkonkoma Hub**. This and similar projects will provide employment and housing opportunities for Long Islanders.
- Support the proposed development of a **slaughterhouse** in Suffolk County which economically will help Long Island's livestock business and will lessen the environmental costs associated with transporting these meats elsewhere.
- Support **streamlining the contracting process for nonprofits** working each County. These agencies provide critical services in conjunction with local government, and administrative stalemates such as delayed payments can detrimentally impact nonprofits, many of which already are operating on shoestring budgets.
- Support all efforts to eradicate **gang violence**.
- Support each County encouraging a dialogue between their respective villages and towns and their regional food bank, Long Island Cares, Inc. We hope to collaboratively identify and respond to needs, either directly or by referring these entities to applicable member agencies possessing the prerequisite skill sets needed for success.

