

Hunger Alert

1. Call Speaker Silver, Support \$10 Minimum Wage, Raise Welfare Grant
2. Attend March 7th Lobby Day
3. Organize March Hunger Awareness
4. Feb. 15 No Farms No Food
5. Coming Soon - Budget Briefings
6. Grassroots

1. Urge Speaker Silver, Governor, Support \$10 Minimum Wage, Raise Welfare Grant

Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver announced at the State of the State that he supports raising the state minimum wage. However, he has not yet announced a figure. Last year we got Assembly Labor Committee Chair Keith Wright to agree to raise the minimum wage, to \$10 an hour - enough to restore the minimum wage to its purchasing power of thirty years ago.

We also need Speaker Silver to stop Governor Cuomo's effort to delay once again the long promised hike in the basic welfare grant - an extra \$1 a day. The basic grant (\$291 a month for a family of 3) had not been raised for 19 years when we got an agreement to raise it 10% a year for three years. Unfortunately, Gov. Cuomo blocked the third year hike in last year's budget and now he wants to only raise it 5% a year (for 2 years). He wants to have children to get bed hungry by cutting 50 cents a day from them to cut the state budget by \$6 million.

Message to Speaker Silver (518 455-3791): Thanks for calling for a hike in the state minimum wage. Please raise it to \$10 an hour. And please restore the hike in the basic welfare grant rather than cut in half as Governor Cuomo proposes.

You could also leave slightly different messages with **Gov. Cuomo(518 474-8390)** and Senate Majority Leader **Dean Skelos((518) 455-3171** - Please raise the minimum wage to \$10 an hour and give poor mothers and their children the full 10% hike in the basic welfare grant.

2. The Annual Statewide HANNYS / ES2 Lobby Day will be in Albany on Wed. March 7

The annual Legislative Education and Action Day will start at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 85 Chestnut St., Albany at 9:30 AM with registration. A briefing on the issues will take place at 10 AM, a rally / action at noon, and lobby visits from 1 to 3:30. We have buses / vans planned from NYC and Rochester and hope to have some from Westchester. Please call Mark at 212 741-8192 xt 5#. Please email dunleamark@aol.com to let us know you are coming so we can schedule enough lobby visits.

Key issues this year include: restoring the basic welfare grant hike; increasing the state minimum wage; access to education for welfare participants; jobs; and fair revenues / close corporate tax loopholes.

3. Plan an event in your community for Hunger Awareness Day – Thursday, March 15th

Hunger Awareness Day is a day for drawing attention to hunger in NYS by holding several community events across the state.

The hope is that increased public awareness will pressure public officials to take positive actions to address this growing problem.

Events can be very simple like organizing a food drive, holding a speakout or asking your legislator to volunteer at a food program. The more events held, the stronger our impact.

We coordinate a children's art project and encourage you to consider joining in. Children are asked to express their feelings about hunger through any art medium and a public display of their work can be held in their community. The art can then be sent to Albany for incorporation into our statewide display. We are also looking for videos this year.

We have organizing packets with lots of event ideas along with step by step instructions. Contact debcatozzi@gmail.com us if you are interested in participating or would like some additional information

4. Feb. 15 No Farms No Food - Lobby Day Rally at State Capitol

Do you care about local food, productive farmland and a strong farm and food economy for New York state? Tell Governor Cuomo and state legislators how much you care about local farms and food!

Join the movement at the No Farms No Food® Rally on February 15, 2012. Unite with farmers, local food advocates, community leaders and others who care about local farms and food at the State Capitol in Albany. Meet in person with our legislators and urge them to support funding and legislation to: strengthen New York's farm and food economy; Protect farmland and the environment; Increase access to locally grown food

[Register for the No Farms No Food® Rally.](#) Wednesday, February 15, New York State Capitol, Albany 9:30 am to 4:00 pm. Bus transportation roundtrip from New York City to Albany is also available. For more information, call the New York State Field Office at (518) 581-0078 or email us at newyork@farmland.org.