

*Hunger Action Network
of New York State
Membership Form*

Yes! I would like to work year-round to fight hunger by becoming a member of Hunger Action Network.

- \$30 Individual \$5 (low/fixed income)
- \$40 Small Organization
- \$75 Medium Organization
- \$150 Large Organization

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Phone (day & eve.): _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Please return to:

Hunger Action Network of New York State at:
260 W. 36 Street, Suite 504, New York, NY 10018
(212) 741-8192

**JOIN THE
THANKSGIVING ACTION
AGAINST HUNGER!**



Mon., November 20, 2006

*Increase Food Program Funding
& Raise the Welfare Grant*

[Hunger Action Network of NYS](#)

275 State Street, 4th Floor
Albany, NY 12210
(518) 434-7371 • Fax (518) 434-7390

260 W. 36th St., Suite 504
New York, NY 10018
(212) 741-8192 • Fax (212) 741-7236

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Dear Friends,

Since 1982, Hunger Action has worked hard to advocate for policies that will eradicate hunger and its causes. However, hunger and poverty are on the rise:

- **A 9% increase in the poverty rate:** The number of people in poverty in New York State has increased from 2.4 million individuals in 2002 to 2.6 million individuals in 2004.
- **An increase in food insecure individuals:** According to USDA, the number of food insecure people in New York State averaged over 2 million between 2002-2004, compared to an average of 1.8 million in 1999-2001. These individuals face inadequate access to sufficient food to fully meet their basic needs at all times due to a lack of financial resources.
- **An increase in the number of people using emergency food relief organizations:** in a 2006 ASH report, 75% of food pantries, 63% of soup kitchens, and 40% of shelters reported that there has been an increase since 2001 in the number of clients who come to their sites for assistance.

Currently, over 3 million New Yorkers must rely on 3,000 food pantries and soup kitchens each year. Too many New Yorkers are forced to choose between food and other basic needs because they lack good jobs and quality healthcare. More than 3 million New Yorkers lack health insurance. It is no wonder that the number of families relying on emergency food resources is increasing.

Please join in the Thanksgiving Action Against Hunger to contribute to a united voice working to end hunger and poverty in NYS. Please be sure to contact us and let us know about the event or activity that you are organizing so that we can include it in our media release. This information will strengthen the impact of the entire statewide event. If you are interested in participating in an event near you or you would like to be a cosponsor of the Action Against Hunger, please contact Hunger Action.

Let's unite to end hunger!

In Hope,

Hunger Action Network of New York State

Sample Letter to Representative

Dear (Name of NY State Legislature Representative),

I am writing to request that you join with me/us and the Hunger Action Network of NYS in the fight against hunger and its root causes in our state. We are currently working to increase funding for the Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program to \$32.19 million. This vital program is the main source of state government funding for food banks and soup kitchens and was cut by \$2 million in 2003 (it has been otherwise flat funded each year at \$22.8 million). In addition, there has been an increase in the number of people using emergency food programs: 75% of food pantries, 63% of soup kitchens, and 40% of shelters reported that there has been an increase since 2001 in the number of clients who come to their sites for assistance (2006 America's Second Harvest report).

New York also needs to raise the welfare grant. Welfare helps poor children and their parents obtain basic necessities such as heat, housing, food and clothing. The Governor and the State Legislature have **not raised the welfare grant since 1990**, and now the value of welfare benefits has fallen to only half of the federal poverty level. With a new Governor taking office in 2007, we need to renew the state's commitment to end poverty and hunger.

Please consider this letter as my sincere request that you join us to increase HPNAP and the welfare grant.

The number of people in poverty in New York State has increased from 2.4 million individuals in 2002 to 2.6 million individuals in 2004. There has also been an increase in food insecure individuals. According to USDA, the number of food insecure people in New York State averaged over 2 million between 2002-2004, compared to an average of 1.8 million in 1999-2001. These individuals face inadequate access to sufficient food to fully meet their basic needs at all times due to a lack of financial resources.

(Add a paragraph to personalize the letter by sharing facts or a story about the impact of poverty and hunger in your region).

I believe that food is a right, not a privilege. Please work to make adequate access to healthy food a reality for the New York children living in poverty. Please contact me to let me what you will do regarding the campaign.

Sincerely, (Name and affiliation) Address and day time phone number for identification purposes) **If you would like more information to include in your letter, contact Hunger Action Network.**

Sample Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Today, concerned citizens and community groups across New York State are participating in the Thanksgiving Action Against Hunger, a state-wide event to call attention to hunger and its root causes. I will be circulating a petition in my area, along with a group of concerned citizens, to inform elected officials about the recent increases in poverty and hunger and to encourage them to aid in creating a solution.

Too many New Yorkers are forced to choose between food and other basic needs because they lack good jobs and quality healthcare. More than 3 million New Yorkers lack health insurance, the majority of whom earn less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Over 3 million New Yorkers must rely on 3,000 emergency food programs each year.

We call on the NYS Legislature to increase funding for the Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program to \$32.19 million to meet the rising demand for emergency food. This vital program is the main source of state government funding for food banks and soup kitchens and was cut by \$2 million in 2003 (it has been otherwise flat funded each year at \$22.8 million). In addition, there has been an increase in the number of people using emergency food programs: 75% of food pantries, 63% of soup kitchens, and 40% of shelters reported that there has been an increase since 2001 in the number of clients who come to their sites for assistance (2006 America's Second Harvest report).

New York also needs to raise the welfare grant. Welfare helps poor children and their parents obtain basic necessities such as heat, housing, food and clothing. The Governor and the State Legislature have not raised the welfare grant since 1990, and now the value of welfare benefits has fallen to only half of the federal poverty level. With a new Governor taking office in 2007, we need to renew the state's commitment to end poverty and hunger.

(YOUR ORGANIZATION) works daily to eliminate hunger and poverty in the (YOUR REGION), and we are not alone. The statewide Thanksgiving Action event is sponsored by the Hunger Action Network of NYS and other community organizations throughout New York working to ensure that everyone has the basic right to food.

Sincerely, (your name, affiliation if any)

(address and day time phone number for identification purposes)

Send your letter 1-2 weeks prior and ask papers to print it on or after Nov. 21st. Some papers have word limits of 50, 100, or 200 words, so check with the media on limits before you submit a letter.

Increasing HPNAP & Raising the Welfare Grant.

The Thanksgiving Action Against Hunger reminds people that hunger is a 365-day-a-year problem in our communities. People typically donate food or volunteer at a food pantry during Thanksgiving. But justice, not only charity, is the real solution to hunger.

The theme for this year's Thanksgiving Action is **Increase Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP) funding and Raise the Welfare Grant.** We are urging elected officials to increase funding for the Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program to \$32.19 million to meet the rising demand for emergency food. This vital program is the main source of state government funding for food banks and soup kitchens and was cut by \$2 million in 2003 (it has been otherwise flat funded each year at \$22.8 million). In addition, there has been an increase in the number of people using emergency food programs: 75% of food pantries, 63% of soup kitchens, and 40% of shelters reported that there has been an increase since 2001 in the number of clients who come to their sites for assistance (2006 America's Second Harvest report).

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Join us in reaching our elected officials to discuss these issues as well as other possible solutions to eliminate the injustice of hunger and poverty in NYS!

For information about legislators and their contact information, go to:

New York State Assembly- <http://assembly.state.ny.us/>

New York State Senate- <http://www.senate.ny.us/>

To contact Governor George Pataki write to:

Executive Chamber, State Capitol, Albany, NY 12224

Governor Elect Spitzer:

<http://www.transitionny.org> to provide public input

ORGANIZING AN ACTIVITY

RECRUIT PARTICIPANTS!

Faith communities, community organizations, student groups and anti-hunger advocates are the foot soldiers in the battle to end hunger. There is power in numbers so try to inform as many people as possible about the event! Hanging up flyers or advertising the event in community newsletters and bulletins is helpful. If you would like some sample flyers for an event, please contact Hunger Action. (See sample Public Service Announcement on p. 9).

Some Suggested Activities:

Activities have the power to educate elected officials and the general public. They also have the power to motivate people into action. Here are some examples:

- **Bring a bag of food to an elected official** with a note encouraging him or her to deliver it to a local food pantry or with a catchy slogan encouraging them to help “fill the bag” with policies that end hunger.
- **Conduct a “phone-in”**, in which a group of people call local officials to inform them about hunger related needs. *Please note that Hunger Action will be sending you an action alert so that you can call your legislators and encourage them to implement job creation programs and universal health care in NYS.*
- Develop a **petition** supporting a specific issue and mail it to your representative after collecting signatures.
- Other important actions may include a rally or vigil, a food drive, fast, and/or volunteering at a local food pantry or soup kitchen. If you plan to organize a letter writing campaign, see sample letters on pages 10 & 11. If you have any other events in mind, do not hesitate to contact us for assistance.

(To find out who your representatives are, contact Hunger Action or your local board of elections or www.congress.org or www.assembly.state.ny.us/ or www.senate.state.ny.us/.)

Please see pages 6 & 7 for more on events.

Sample Public Service Announcement:

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

For Immediate Release: November 7, 2006
For more information: Your name and phone #

Statewide Thanksgiving Action Against Hunger Planned for Monday, November 20th

On Monday, November 20th, 2006 New Yorkers are taking ACTION AGAINST HUNGER in a statewide series of events to call for an end to hunger and its causes.

(NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION OR GROUP) encourages people to participate in a local anti-hunger forum scheduled to take place at (TIME OF EVENT) at (NAME OF LOCAL FOOD PANTRY). Topics of discussion will include the causes of hunger and its potential solutions. Attendees will learn about hunger in New York State and potential solutions. This event is open to the public.

For more information about the THANKSGIVING ACTION AGAINST HUNGER, please contact (YOUR NAME) at (ORGANIZATION'S TELEPHONE NUMBER). The statewide THANKSGIVING ACTION AGAINST HUNGER is sponsored by the Hunger Action Network of New York State, (518) 434-7371.

Note: For radio PSAs, try to include text that could be read on air lasting 15 seconds & 30 seconds.

Sample Media Advisory

For Immediate Release:

November 11, 2006

For More Information:

Your name and phone #

Statewide Action Against Hunger

Monday, November 20th

Anti-hunger advocates, concerned individuals, low-income residents, faith communities and students will coordinate local events across the state as part of the Thanksgiving Action Against Hunger on Monday, Nov. 20. In (Name of Your County), a group of citizens will be holding a (rally, fast, meal supper, etc.) at (Name of location) at 11 AM to draw attention to the fact that New Yorkers must choose between food and other expenses such as medication, rent, heat and other bills.

The number of people in poverty in New York State has increased from 2.4 million individuals in 2002 to 2.6 million individuals in 2004. In addition, the USDA reports that the number of food insecure people in New York State averaged over 2 million between 2002-2004, compared to an average of 1.8 million in 1999-2001. These individuals face inadequate access to sufficient food to fully meet their basic needs at all times due to a lack of financial resources. More than 3 million New Yorkers lack health insurance, the majority of whom earn less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

The Statewide Action Against Hunger is organized each year by Hunger Action Network of NYS in order to end the root cause of hunger. Organizers urge elected officials to increase funding for the Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program to \$32.19 million to meet the rising demand for emergency food. New York also needs to increase the welfare grant. The Governor and the State Legislature have not raised the welfare grant since 1990, and now the value of welfare benefits has fallen to only half of the federal poverty level.

For further information about the event or about hunger related issues, please contact (name of your group) at (tel #) or contact Hunger Action Network of NYS at (212) 741-8192 or (518) 434-7371.

How to Hook the Media

In order to reach as many people as possible, it is important that the public and NYS Legislators be made aware of your event. Below are helpful tips on how to involve the media at your event.

Public Service Announcement: A public service announcement is sent out three to four weeks before an event. The media (radio stations, newspapers, TV station) will announce a PSA about your event to the general public. This can attract more participants to your event. For a sample PSA, see page 9.

Media Advisory: A media advisory is sent out at least one week before the event. It is used to inform the media about your event so that they will cover it. The information in the advisory will need to be succinct and to the point, answering five basic questions: who, what, when, where and why. The media is likely to cover an event if it is considered worthy of coverage, so make sure you include any notable information in the advisory. For instance, you may want to mention if there has been an increase in the number of hungry families in your community. For a sample media advisory, see page 8. Media advisories are only one page and they are double spaced.

Media Release: A media release is sent out the day of your event. You should also bring copies of the release to the event for any media that you invited. The media release expands on all of the information in the advisory and provides more in depth information about what happened at the event and the message that you are trying to convey. It includes at least a few quotes from key people in the community, such as low-income people, food providers, faith leaders, or others. Media releases are 1-2 pages and they are single spaced.

Letter to the Editor: A letter to the editor is sent out 1-2 weeks prior to the event. In the past, letters written to the editor about hunger during the Thanksgiving Holiday have had an excellent chance of being published. It's a great way to inform many people about hunger related issues. If you can, try to make hunger issues specific to your area. Hunger Action can assist you with this. Also, research your local newspapers to see if they feature a topic in the editorial section for one day or one week. You may be able to write a series of letters about hunger with different members of your community. For a sample letter to the editor, see page 10.

Action Guide

Here are 6 different types of actions/events!

FAST

Encourage your community to participate in a Fast. Be sure to drink more fluids than usual and keep physical labor at a minimum. Since your metabolism will be slowed, try to keep warm. When you break your Fast, eat a light meal. Reflect on why you are participating in the fast and remember that there are approximately 35 million people in the United States who suffer from hunger every day. Recognize that the Fast brings you in solidarity with hungry people who go without food on a regular basis, not just for one day!

LETTER WRITING CAMPAIGN

Organize a letter writing campaign! You can write letters to newspapers or to representatives about the causes of hunger (see samples on pgs. 10 & 11). Letter writing is an excellent way to inform our representatives about many hunger related issues. You can send an email to your representative through our web page: www.hungeractionnys.org. If you need any fact sheets for your campaign, please contact Hunger Action or go to www.hungeractionnys.org/hungerny.htm

RALLY

This is a great way to get your message out! Recruit a group of people to speak at the rally. Invite people who have experienced hunger first hand, as well as anti-hunger advocates from community organizations. Hang up flyers and use PSAs to get the word out!

FOOD DRIVE

Organize a food drive in your community at a place where many people pass by during the day. Hang up flyers or posters in local businesses, community centers, restaurants and schools. You can also prepare a PSA about the food drive. Local restaurants or cafés may be willing to donate food. A grocery store is a great place to hold a food drive because many people will purchase a canned good on the spot. If you would like sample flyers for a food drive, please contact Hunger Action.

DEVELOP AN INNOVATIVE FOOD PROJECT

Community food projects foster self-reliant and healthy communities in our state. Gardens, food cooperatives, community-supported agriculture, and farmers' markets are among the many tools that can be used to support the local economy and connect healthy food with everyone in need. By initiating these types of projects, you can meet the needs of New Yorkers who lack adequate access to food as well as bring your community together to improve its food system. For assistance contact Hunger Action Network.

INVITE AN ELECTED OFFICIAL TO A LOCAL FOOD PANTRY OR SOUP KITCHEN

Write a letter to your elected official asking him/her to visit and volunteer at a local Emergency Food Program. This will give your representative the opportunity to see first hand how many people are going without enough food in your area! Ask the official what he/she will do to help end hunger.