



**Testimony: General Welfare Committee of the New York City Council  
September 6, 2017**

West Side Campaign Against Hunger (WSCAH) would like to thank Councilmember Stephen Levin, Chair of the General Welfare Committee, for the opportunity to **oppose any and all cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Resolution**. WSCAH would also like to thank the City Council, and Speaker Melissa Mark Viverito, for consistently prioritizing anti-hunger programs with increases to the Emergency Food Assistance Program, and the expansion of universal free school lunch in nearly all New York City public schools.

Founded in 1979, West Side Campaign Against Hunger is the country's first supermarket-style, multi-service food pantry, and one of the largest emergency food providers in New York City. **In the last year, we provided nearly 1.5 million pounds of food, which included over 300 thousand pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables, to nearly 9,000 households;** but our customers come to us for more than groceries. WSCAH combines access to healthy food, with entitlement benefits, job training, and policy advocacy to work in partnership with our customers by emphasizing their right to self-determination and dignity.

As the country's first supermarket-style food pantry, we offer 3 days of food based on a customer's family size in tandem with SNAP, health insurance, SCRIE/DRIE and eviction prevention to name a few, to not only alleviate hunger, but to alleviate reliance on the emergency food system as a whole. In FY2017, WSCAH enrolled 690 families in SNAP. SNAP has a far greater capacity than emergency food providers to meet the needs of those who are food insecure. The emergency food system was never designed to replace SNAP as the first defense against hunger. SNAP does in two months what emergency food providers do in a year, and therefore, it plays an irreplaceable role in ending hunger.

The 690 families we enrolled in SNAP are a smaller representation of the approximately 1.7M residents in New York City who rely on SNAP. Any cut in SNAP whatsoever, would without a doubt adversely impact New Yorkers in all five boroughs. The proposed White House budget would cut more than \$193 billion to SNAP over 10 years. Consequently, the proposed cuts to SNAP would increase demand on emergency food programs like WSCAH, all across the city.

Once again, West Side Campaign Against Hunger would like to thank the City Council's General Welfare Committee for the opportunity to testify about the need to **oppose any and all cuts to SNAP**.