



The Honorable Jim McGovern
Chairman
Committee on Rules
U.S. House of Representatives

December 14, 2021

Dear Representative McGovern,

As chair of the National Association of Counties (NACo) Human Services and Education Policy Steering Committee, I write to thank you for taking the time to meet with county officials to discuss local efforts to combat food insecurity. NACo applauds your leadership in pursuing bipartisan solutions to the hunger crisis that continues to impact our communities. County governments remain committed to partnering with Congress and the Administration to ensure all county residents can access the healthy food they need to thrive.

Counties serve as the front line of the social safety net, providing critical services funded by a combination of federal, state and local dollars that safeguard the health and economic wellbeing of our residents. Counties are involved in promoting public health through 1,943 local health departments, while 257,000 county human services employees across the country deliver vital services to our nation's most vulnerable populations. We administer key federal nutrition programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in 10 states and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) in health departments across the nation, but we also contribute funding—including Recovery Funds allocated under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021—to local food insecurity initiatives. We are also investing our flexible Recovery Funds, allocated under the American Rescue Plan Act, to help our vulnerable residents and businesses put food on the table as we continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We can and must do more to ensure no family has to wonder where its next meal is coming from, and county governments are uniquely positioned to help inform and implement national policies to accomplish this goal. From identifying burdensome red tape and necessary flexibilities to making federal assistance programs more responsive to local economic conditions, counties stand ready to work with our federal partners to eliminate hunger once and for all. We join you in urging our partners at the White House to convene a National Hunger Conference to spur a whole-government approach to the epidemic of hunger and food and nutrition insecurity. Additionally, we ask you to ensure that the National Hunger Conference include a NACo representative to ensure the county voice and perspective remains part of these important conversations.

Once again, thank you for generously taking the time to meet with county officials to learn from our perspective and share your inspiring vision for ending hunger in America. We stand ready to work with you on this matter. Please direct any follow-up items or questions to NACo's Associate Legislative Director for Human Services and Education, Rachel Mackey, at rmackey@naco.org

Sincerely,

Craig Rice
Council Member, Montgomery County, Maryland
Chair, NACo Human Services and Education Steering Committee