

Health Commission
City and County of San Francisco
Resolution No. 18-7

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING FOOD SECURITY IN SAN FRANCISCO AND ENDORSING THE
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOOD SECURITY TASK FORCE 2018 ASSESSMENT OF FOOD SECURITY IN
SAN FRANCISCO**

WHEREAS, in 2013 the San Francisco Board of Supervisors declared that access to safe, nutritious, and culturally acceptable food is a basic human right and is essential to human health, and that hunger, food insecurity, and poor nutrition were pressing health issues that required immediate action; and

WHEREAS, food security is access by all people to nutritionally adequate, culturally acceptable diet at all times for an active, healthy life; and food insecurity is a household level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food; and

WHEREAS, food insecurity can result in poorer nutritional intake, persistent unhealthy eating behaviors, poor health outcomes including increased risk of multiple chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and hypertension, and exacerbation of existing physical and mental health conditions; and

WHEREAS, food insecurity contributes to health disparities in all populations; and

WHEREAS, research show that adults in food insecure households have more emergency room visits and hospital admissions¹ and food insecurity is associated with an extra \$1,863 in annual health care expenditures per person, and nationally an additional \$77.5 billion health care expenditures annually;² and

WHEREAS, the Food Security Task Force estimates that 1 in 4 San Franciscans are at high risk of food insecurity due to low income³ and data from the California Health Interview Survey indicates that food insecurity among low income San Franciscans grew from previous years; and

WHEREAS, the San Francisco Food Security Task Force 2018 report identifies the following groups as being at high risk for food insecurity: low income residents, pregnant women and families with children, transitional aged youth, immigrants, older adults, people with disabilities, and people experiencing homelessness; and

WHEREAS, San Franciscans' food insecurity is due to the inability to secure sufficient financial resources to purchase enough nutritious food to support a healthy diet on a consistent basis; the inability to access affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate foods safely and conveniently; and the inability to prepare healthy meals and/or the knowledge of basic nutrition, safety, and cooking; and

¹ Berkowitz, Seligman, and Basu. JAMA Int Med, 2018.

² Berkowitz, Basu, and Seligman. Health Services Research: 2017.

³ 27% of San Franciscans have incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level (\$40,840 for a family of 3)

WHEREAS, the key challenges to San Franciscans' ability to afford nutritious food on a consistent basis include the high cost of living, low benefit levels and under-enrollment in CalFresh, and ineligibility of many food insecure San Franciscans to receive CalFresh; and insufficient affordable food retail outlets; and nonprofit food programs at capacity with wait lists; and inadequate capacity for out-of-school time meals like after school supper and summer lunch for children; and fears due to immigration status; and

WHEREAS, the infrastructure for many community-based organizations that operate food programs is at capacity and in need of investments in infrastructure, such as warehouse and commercial kitchens to keep up with the growing demand for food; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the California Medical Association adopted a resolution promoting the use of food security screening among medical providers to identify children and adults who are food insecure, and in 2015, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) issued a policy statement recommending all pediatricians screen for food insecurity as a routine part of medical care, and in 2016 the American Diabetes Association also encouraged food insecurity screening in their annual Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes, and in 2017, the Food Security Task Force issued recommendations and a guidance document for standard screening for food security in San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, Healthy People 2020 goals include eliminating very low food security among children and reducing household food insecurity and in doing so reduce hunger, and in 2016 San Francisco Health Improvement Partnership identified reducing food insecurity among low income pregnant women and reducing the wait time for home delivered meals for seniors as being strategic priorities for improving healthy eating in San Francisco, and the Population Health Division of the San Francisco Department of Public Health has identified food insecurity as a priority equity issue; and

WHEREAS, it will take sustained collaboration and collective action among the public and private sectors to change policies, systems, and the environment to ensure that all San Franciscans are food secure and hunger free; and

WHEREAS, the Food Security Task Force was reauthorized by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in July 2018, and charged with tracking data on food insecurity and providing the city with recommendations for policy, programs and funding to improve food security;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Health Commission endorses the recommendations in the 2018 Food Security Assessment issued by the Food Security Task Force; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Health Commission recognizes the critical role of the health sector in ensuring that San Franciscans are food secure;

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Health Commission encourages health plans, particularly MediCal health plans, to collaborate with their networks and the Food Security Task Force to address food insecurity through prioritization of screening, connection to community food resources, and support of additional food resources; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Health Commission recognizes that adequate food resources to support food insecure San Franciscans are needed; supports the Department of Public Health to work with the Food Security Task Force, other city departments, community groups, private organizations and residents to ensure there are adequate food resources for all food insecure San Franciscans, and that infrastructure and workforce is developed to support the role of navigation and connection to food resources.

I hereby certify that the San Francisco Health Commission at its meeting of December 4, 2018 adopted the foregoing resolution.

Mark Morewitz
Executive Secretary to the Health Commission

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