



MEDIA ADVISORY

Students to Lead Lobby Day at MA State House in Support of College Hunger Relief

*Legislators, student advocates and hunger relief leaders
convene around college hunger policy*

WHAT: As 37 percent of public university students in MA face food insecurity, the [MA Hunger Free Campus Coalition](#) and MASSPIRG students will join legislators at the MA State House for a **lobby and advocacy day** around the issue of college hunger and urgent need for legislation to address it. The event will focus on investing in student wellbeing and building the Commonwealth's future workforce by supporting equitable access to higher education by removing the lack of access to food as a barrier.

A speaking program featuring students, advocates, state representatives and senators will precede lobby meetings between student advocates and legislators.

WHO: **Andy Vargas**, State Representative (D-Haverhill)
Mindy Domb, State Representative (D-Amherst)
Sal DiDomenico, State Senator (D-Everett)
Joan Lovely, State Senator (D-Salem)
Dierdre Cummings, MASSPIRG Legislative Director
Lisa Carter, Roxbury Community College Associate Dean of Students
Kate Adams, The Greater Boston Food Bank Policy Manager
Laura Sylvester, Food Bank of Western Massachusetts Public Policy Manager
Lizabeth Davis, Salem State Hunger Free Campus Coalition/Center for Civic Engagement
Sean Simonini, MASSPIRG UMass Lowell Student
Diego Maldonado, MASSPIRG Salem State University Student

WHEN: Thursday, March 30, 2023
9:30 – 11:00 a.m.
**Media are encouraged to arrive at 9:30 for the speaking program at 10:00.
Interviews may be available upon request before or following the program.*

WHERE: Massachusetts State House, Gardner Auditorium
24 Beacon Street, Boston, MA

Background:

The MA Hunger Free Campus Coalition and MASSPIRG students urge the legislature to include \$4 million in the FY24 state budget to fund the Hunger Free Campus Initiative, and to pass *An Act Establishing the MA Hunger-Free Campus Initiative* ([S.835](#) / [H.1293](#)) This legislation would fund anti-hunger resources across MA college campuses such as food pantries, educational resources around SNAP and provide a single point of contact for hunger needs on campuses.

The coalition is co-led by The Greater Boston Food Bank, the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts and the Mass Law Reform Institute; and seeks to promote food access through awareness, best-practice sharing and legislative action among college students at two- and four-year public higher education institutions.

About the Massachusetts Hunger-Free Campus Coalition

The Massachusetts Hunger-Free Campus Coalition was formed in the fall of 2019 to address food insecurity among high-need populations enrolled in MA colleges and universities. Comprised of over 30 colleges, students, hunger-relief advocates, and anti-poverty organizations, collectively, the coalition is working to leverage and expand existing resources and services including maximizing student enrollment in federal nutrition programs such as SNAP, supporting meal swipe options with campus food vendors, ensuring that campuses work with food banks to expand food pantries, and other initiatives designed to address food insecurity among the student population. Our goal is to ensure equity and incorporate student voices as we work to make Massachusetts college campuses hunger free. To learn more, visit <https://www.hungerfreecampusma.org/>.

About MASSPIRG Students

MASSPIRG Students work with professional staff at colleges and universities to make sure their peers have the skills, opportunities and training they need to create a better, more sustainable future for all of us. Its chapters provide the training, professional support and resources students need to tackle climate change, protect public health, revitalize our democracy, feed the hungry and more. Students have been at the forefront of social change throughout history, from civil rights, to voting rights to protecting the environment. For nearly 50 years MASSPIRG has helped students to get organized, mobilized and energized so they can continue to be on the cutting edge of positive change.

About The Greater Boston Food Bank:

The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) is the largest hunger-relief organization in New England and among the largest food banks in the country. As the food bank for Eastern Massachusetts, GBFB is feeding people in 190 towns across the region, distributing the equivalent of nearly 90 million meals through a network of 600 dedicated food distribution partners and programs. A member of the national Feeding America network, GBFB's mission is to end hunger here. The organization remains committed to the belief that access to healthy food is a human right regardless of an individual's circumstances. Through policy, partnerships, and providing free, nutritious, and culturally responsive food, GBFB is committed to addressing the root causes of food insecurity while promoting racial, gender and economic equity in food access. For more information and to help us help others, visit us at GBFB.org, follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) (@gr8bosfoodbank) and [Instagram](#), or call us at 617.427.5200.

About the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts believes that everyone has a right to healthy food regardless of their circumstances. Serving Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire counties, The Food Bank leads the region's emergency food network, distributing nutritious food to households with lower incomes. Since 1982, they have been providing individuals facing hunger with the food they need to survive and leading communities towards long-term solutions to food insecurity by addressing its underlying causes. They are committed to creating a Western Massachusetts where no one goes hungry, and everyone has access to nutritious food. For more information, visit foodbankwma.org.

About Massachusetts Law Reform Institute (MLRI)

Founded in 1968, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute (MLRI) is a nonprofit poverty law and policy program that provides statewide advocacy and leadership in advancing laws, policies, and practices that secure economic, racial, and social justice for low-income people and communities.

Media Contact

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