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## **14<sup>th</sup> Annual March for the Food Bank Kicks Off November 21**

### **Two-day Walk-a-thon Benefits the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts**

**November 13, 2023 [Chicopee, MA]** - The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual March for the Food Bank kicks off Monday, November 20<sup>th</sup> at Martin Luther King, Jr. Family Services in Springfield. NEPM's Monte Belmonte, Congressman Jim McGovern, Food Bank Executive Director, Andrew Morehouse, and 93.9 The River WRSI's Steve Sanderson and Joan Holliday, along with community marchers will join the annual 43-mile, two-day trek from Springfield to Greenfield on November 20 and 21 to raise funds for the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts and awareness about food insecurity across Western Massachusetts.

#### **WHY WE MARCH**

Andrew Morehouse, Executive Director of the Food Bank, noted that food insecurity is on the rise. "Since March, there has been an increase in the number of individuals seeking assistance from the Food Bank and the broader food assistance network across all four counties in Western Massachusetts. The expiration of pandemic relief benefits, such as the Child Tax Credit and SNAP benefit increases, is adding to the challenges already imposed by inflation, such as higher food, housing and childcare costs."

**Every dollar donated will provide three nourishing meals.** Community support ensures that fresh, nutritious food reaches the tables of our neighbors today and tomorrow. **This year, our goal is to raise \$500,000 – the equivalent of 1,500,000 meals!**

#### **HOW TO ENGAGE WITH THE MARCH**

- Register to walk at [walkforthefoodbank.org](http://walkforthefoodbank.org).
- Tune in to the Fabulous 413 on 88.5 NEPM weekdays at 3pm, and WRSI-93.9 The River, this week and during the March for updates and interviews.

- Call 1-888-323-HOPE Monday and Tuesday, November 20 and 21, from 8:30am to 5:00pm to make a donation.
- Make an online contribution anytime at [marchforthefoodbank.org](http://marchforthefoodbank.org).
- Purchase a Monte's Mixed Bag at Cooper's Corner in Florence or the State Street Fruit Store in Northampton, filled with surprise gifts and treats from local vendors.

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts is grateful to our top tier sponsors: CoBank; Alekman DiTusa, LLC; Boston Mutual Life Insurance Company; Dean's Beans Organic Coffee; Greenfield Savings Bank; Instacart; M&T Bank; Mountain View Landscapes; Northeast Solar; PeoplesBank; Performance Food Service; Lia Auto Group, and Fallon Health.

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***About the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts:*** *Since 1982, the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts has been a community partner to end hunger. We provide healthy and culturally responsive food directly through our own programs (Mobile Food Banks and Brown Bag: Food for Elders), and through the food assistance network in Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, and Hampshire counties. These independent pantries, meal sites and shelters are on the front lines providing food and resources to individuals, families, seniors, children, veterans, and people with disabilities, so they may lead healthy and meaningful lives. The Food Bank partners on public education and advocacy to address systemic issues that lead to hunger, operating with the belief that everyone has a right to healthy food.*