



In Support of HB20-1422: “Food Pantry Assistance Grant Program”

Esteemed Members of the Colorado House’s State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committee:

At a time when the nation is reeling from a global public health crisis and deepening national recession, ensuring equitable access to healthful food while simultaneously supporting Colorado farmers is one of the soundest investments that our state may make. Currently, more than 1 in 10 able-bodied Colorado workers have lost their jobs, which is driving an incredible increase in need at our local food banks and pantries. A recent national survey indicating that 17 percent of American families are not getting enough to eat, a 400 percent increase from 2018, highlights the unprecedented need to expand the capacity and reach of our charitable food system to help mitigate the negative effects of this economic crisis.

By expanding the state’s Food Pantry Assistance Grant, we can tackle the effects of this fledgling recession in a multi-pronged approach: we can ensure that all Coloradans, regardless of where they live or whether or not they are currently employed can still have access to fresh produce, dairy, and meat; simultaneously, we can support our local rural economies by increasing the demand for Colorado-produced foods when consumer purchasing has declined drastically. As a result, we are averting a deepening public health crisis fueled by hunger while also mitigating the root cause of poverty by stimulating our local economies and ensuring our Colorado producers can continue to sell what they grow.

Addressing poverty and hunger requires a holistic approach, and we at the Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger are pleased at how seamlessly this bill blends public health and economic stimulus effectively to help lift up tens if not hundreds of thousands of Colorado families. It is for these reasons that we enthusiastically support HB20-1422, and encourage you to please vote to pass the bill onto the Committee of the Whole for further consideration.

Thank you.

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