



*Getting to the
Root of the
Problem*

Hunger Action Network OF NEW YORK STATE

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Hunger Alert – October 2008

1. Call the Governor to Sign the childhood lead poisoning bill
2. Legislative Candidate Forums: Troy Oct. 16; Yonkers October 21st; Lower East Side NYC Oct. 27th; Buffalo Oct. 21st at 4 PM
3. Monday Nov. 24 Thanksgiving Fast and Action Against Hunger
4. Oct. 27th Northeast Regional Anti-Hunger Network conference
5. SNAPSHOT Survey Volunteers Needed for Welfare to Work Programs
6. Healthy Community Harvest Website launched – Just in Time for Holiday Giving
7. One New York: Fighting for Fairness – a new budget coalition

1. Call the Governor to Sign the childhood lead poisoning bill

A comprehensive piece of legislation that would help New York make tremendous strides toward eliminating childhood lead poisoning was sent to the Governor on Monday. He has up to 10 days to act, but he could act at any time. We need you to make phone calls right away to the Governor's office to show that there is strong support for the bill.

ACTION NEEDED re: A.6299 – The Childhood Lead Poisoning Primary Prevention and Safe Housing Act.
Who to call: Terryl Brown Clemons, Acting Counsel to the Governor. Phone number: 518-474-8343

Message: "I am calling from [organization and/or location] to urge the Governor to sign the childhood lead poisoning prevention legislation into law. I know the state has a significant budget gap, but New York simply cannot afford to allow thousands of children – primarily low income and minority children – to continue to be poisoned by lead each year. The social cost to the state if we fail to act, will be much higher than the cost of doing targeted lead inspections in high-risk areas. This is a matter of racial, economic and environmental justice. And it's simply the right thing to do for the children of New York."

Each Year in New York thousands of children are poisoned by lead in their homes. Current law only requires that housing be inspected for lead-paint hazards after a child has already been permanently injured by lead. Lead poisoning causes **IRREVERSIBLE** damage to children – lead has been scientifically proven to shave points off kid's IQ scores, dramatically increase the likelihood of developing developmental disabilities, juvenile delinquency and child pregnancy – all resulting in substantial long term costs to government, society, to families and obviously to the kids.

2. Legislative Candidate Forums: Troy Oct. 16; Yonkers October 21st; Lower East Side NYC Oct. 27th; Buffalo Oct. 21st at 4 PM

Hunger Action and the Empire State Economic Security Campaign (ES3) are organizing a series of forums with state legislative candidates to discuss how they stand on issues such as the welfare grant, heating costs, tax

reform, affordable housing, etc. For World Food Day, the forum is at the Troy YWCA at 21 First St. On October 21st at 6pm, the event will be held at the Yonkers Riverfront Library, One Larkin Plaza. University Settlement House is planning to hold one at 6 PM on Mon. Oct. 27th with the Assembly Speaker.

3. Monday Nov. 24 Thanksgiving Fast and Action Against Hunger

Thanksgiving Fast and Action Against Hunger is an annual event held throughout the state on the Monday before Thanksgiving to draw attention to the problem of hunger and needed solutions. Fasting is part of the tradition of most of the world's religions. "Fasting is a transforming act – it has the moral power to bring about political change worthy of our state," notes Bishop Howard Hubbard.

This Thanksgiving, the theme of our campaign is "***Poverty to Prosperity***" We are urging state elected officials to make ending hunger in NY a true priority by supporting: A long over due increase in the Welfare grant; an increase in the minimum wage; Creation of green jobs that pay a live-able wage; Universal, Single Payer Health Care; An increase in state funding for HEAP; Fair Tax Policies – making the wealthy pay their fair share; and, An increase in affordable housing.

Please consider holding a Thanksgiving event in your community. You may download our Action Packet to help you in organizing your event! www.hungeractionnys.org or call us and we will mail it to you.

4. Oct. 27th Northeast Regional Anti-Hunger Network conference

Please join us on Monday Oct. 27th for the NERAHN Anti-Hunger Program and Policy Conference. The conference is co-sponsored by the Food Research and Action Center. It will be held from 8:30 am-5:00 pm in Shrewsbury, MA. Please go to www.nerahn.org to register. Space is limited.

Congressman Jim McGovern will keynote the conference. We hope you can join us for a full day of learning focused on the sharing of many innovative and exciting anti-hunger programs and policies that can help you decrease hunger in your community. NERAHN is the coalition of anti-hunger agencies from Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut

5. SNAPSHOT Survey Volunteers Needed for Welfare to Work Programs

Our staff and supporters are still working hard on our Snapshot Survey to we evaluate the performance of NYS Department of Social Services (DSS) and Human Resource Administration (HRA) offices. The survey asks current and former Welfare to Work participants a series of questions about their experience in the program, what they gained from it, and what they wish they could change about the program. We're still currently seeking volunteers from across New York to help administer the survey at DSS/HRA offices, soup kitchens, and food pantries. To find out how you can help, please contact Lisa Ritchie at 212-741-8192, ext. 4#, or by email at lritchie@hungeractionnys.org.

6. Healthy Community Harvest Website launched – Just in Time for Holiday Giving

Hunger Action Network has officially launched the updated Healthy Community Harvest website at: www.healthycommunityharvest.com. Customers are now able to purchase Healthy Community Harvest products online and have them shipped directly to them. Customers can also view nutrition data, and get information on our farmers as well as other NY farms. There is a listing of our tasting events, links to news, and a youth and partners page.

Healthy Community Harvest is a not for profit food packaging and processing business started by Hunger Action in Schenectady's Hamilton Hill neighborhood. The project's main goals are: 1) Make a connection

between farmers and a food insecure neighborhood in an effort to provide affordable produce and products to low income Hamilton Hill residents; 2) Provide employment and economic development opportunities for low income residents; 3) Provide additional markets for New York's farmers; 4) Promote healthy foods to help fight childhood obesity.

7. One New York: Fighting for Fairness – a new budget coalition

Gov. Paterson is calling state legislators back to Albany on Nov. 18th to cut another \$2 billion from the state budget – while continuing to rule out raising taxes on the wealthiest New Yorkers to help trim the \$6 billion budget deficit. The present state budget deficit was not caused by excessive spending on programs to help low and middle income New Yorkers. It was caused by massive tax cuts for the rich over the last two decades, combined with recent multi-billion dollar investments in school aid and county property tax relief. Reclaiming some of the tax giveaways, especially in a recession, is a far fairer solution than across the board cuts in state spending. Investments in anti-poverty initiatives that have gone unfunded for decades are sorely needed.

A broad coalition of advocates, providers and labor organizations are banding together to urge State and City governments to look beyond budget cuts as a way of dealing with the current financial crisis. The new alliance, "One New York: Fighting for Fairness", includes representation from an unusually broad range of service sectors, including education, healthcare, government employees, and human service providers.

The coalition has four principles: One New York: Fighting for Fairness - Communities must be protected in this time of crisis; City and State Government Must Not Balance Their Budgets on the Backs of the Neediest; We Cannot Cut Our Way Out of this Economic Downturn: City and State Must Fairly Address Our Revenue Needs; Budget Cuts Will Hurt the Economy; Investing in Our Communities Will Help. To join the coalition, contact Shana Marks Odinga (718-222-1089 x276) at the Alliance for Quality Education.