

Advocacy

It's a new year, which means that soon we'll have new leaders in Washington and in our state. Here's what you should know as we gear up to advocate for a healthy, hunger-free Arizona this year.

- **ARIZONA SENATE UPDATE:** 17 Republicans and 13 Democrats will be serving in the Arizona State Senate. Senator Steve Yarbrough of Chandler will be the next Senate President.
- **ARIZONA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES UPDATE:** Republicans continue to hold a majority with 35 seats while Democrats hold 25 seats. Representative J.D. Mesnard of Chandler has been elected Speaker of the House for the next legislative session.
- **WASHINGTON UPDATE:** Tom O'Halleran will replace Ann Kirkpatrick as US Representative for Arizona's 1st Congressional District. Andy Biggs will replace Matt Salmon as US Representative for Arizona's 5th Congressional District. John McCain and Jeff Flake will continue to serve as Arizona's U.S. Senators.



Our Priorities

In Washington, we'll work with our partners to protect nutrition programs from harmful cuts and block grants. And we'll fight to keep school meals healthy. We'll also partner with our friends in agriculture to prevent cuts to our nation's most vital nutrition program — SNAP (commonly known as food stamps).

In Arizona, we'll continue to lead the effort to repeal the SNAP finger-imaging requirement, make nutrition assistance programs more accessible, and protect and expand funding for the emergency food relief network.

OUR MEMBERS



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want to help?

Visit our website and subscribe to our email list. We'll send you legislative action opportunities so that our elected officials and policymakers will hear your voice!

What Are Block Grants?

This year, I want to introduce you to a term you may never have heard before, but that you'll be hearing a lot about soon: "block grants."

Why We Care About Block Grants (and Why You Should, Too)

This year, Congress, led by Speaker Paul Ryan, will likely want to block grant the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps, and the school meals program that feeds hundreds of thousands of Arizona kids. **BLOCK GRANTING SNAP AND SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAMS WILL MEAN MORE HUNGRY KIDS, SENIORS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN ARIZONA.** That's why we're so opposed to this idea.

How Block Grants Work

When a program is block granted, the federal government gives states a lump sum of money to address a specific issue, like hunger. At first, it sounds good. Supporters of block granting argue that it will allow each state to design programs to fit its needs. But the truth is that states already have a lot of leeway in how they run their food stamp program. **BLOCK GRANTS ARE REALLY JUST A SNEAKY WAY TO CUT FUNDING FOR PROGRAMS THAT FEED ARIZONA'S MOST VULNERABLE FAMILIES.** Block grants also threaten Arizona's budget because if need goes up, Arizona taxpayers will have to shoulder the costs.

We should be smart in how we spend our tax dollars, but there are many, less essential areas to cut government spending before we cut off a lifeline for so many seniors, children and people with disabilities.

Stay tuned for more information!

THANKS FOR VOLUNTEERING!

A big THANK YOU to volunteers who came out on September 24 to package pinto beans into family friendly one pound bags. **THANKS TO YOU, WE PACKAGED MORE THAN 5,700 POUNDS OF BEANS – ENOUGH TO FEED 28,500 PEOPLE!** Our biggest volunteer crew was composed of The Ohio State University Alums from across the Valley. At 50 strong, they showed a ton (actually nearly 3 tons) of Buckeye pride!



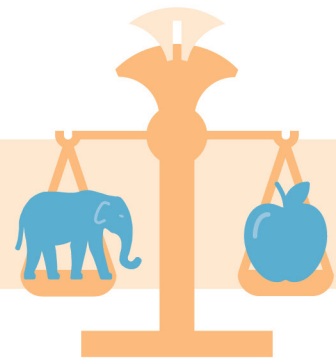
Logistics Task Force Fun Facts!

Transportation

Spearheading the “Logistics Task Force,” **AAFB BRINGS TOGETHER MEMBERS FROM EACH FOOD BANK TO EFFICIENTLY SHARE PRODUCE AND TRANSPORT IT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.** The numbers are in for the first quarter of this fiscal year. Here’s what our team has accomplished to help get food to families in need from July to September 2016!

4,834,391 total pounds transported

*Roughly equal to the weight of
371 fully grown African elephants!*



1,992,731 pounds of produce

*Forty percent of the food we
transported was produce!*

385,983 total miles driven

*We and our food bank partners drove enough
miles to circle the earth 15 times!*



NUTRITION PROGRAMS WORK!

The US Census Bureau’s new data on poverty show that, in the past year, **SNAP (FORMERLY THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM) PULLED 4.5 MILLION AMERICANS OUT OF POVERTY. THE SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAM HELPED LIFT 1.2 MILLION PEOPLE NATIONWIDE ABOVE THE POVERTY LINE AS WELL.** The national poverty rate also fell to 13.5%; in Arizona, the official poverty rate is now 17.4%.



hunger relief license plate

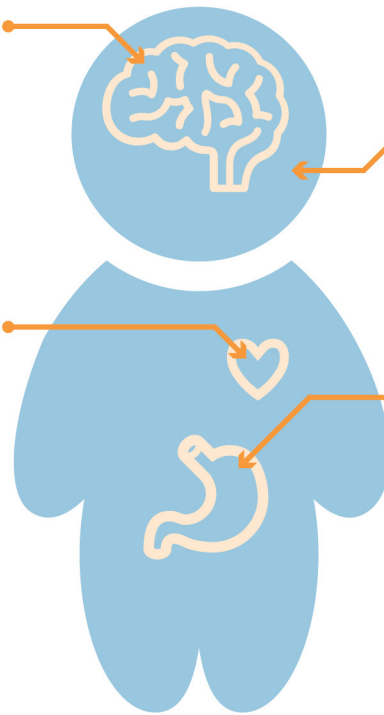
Have you seen this license plate when driving around Arizona, or do you even have one yourself? The Hunger Relief license plate costs \$25 (plus postage and handling) and benefits AAFB. **Get yours when you renew your Arizona license plate** and help end hunger one "plate" at a time. A big thanks to everyone who has this special plate. See you on the road!

Hunger Hurts Kids' Health and Learning!

Education and Public Awareness

A *Partnership for America's Success* report finds that "children who had been food insecure in kindergarten had a **13% DROP IN THEIR READING AND MATH TEST SCORES** compared to their food-secure peers."

Kids who face hunger have higher levels of **BEHAVIORAL AND EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS**. *Bloomberg* reports that discipline problems in school are "nearly **50% HIGHER** at the end of the month, when benefits have typically run out, than at the beginning of the month" among students in families that receive food stamp benefits.



Kids who face hunger are more likely to experience **HEADACHES, COLDS, EAR INFECTIONS AND FATIGUE** according to *Share Our Strength — No Kid Hungry*.

Research from *Share Our Strength — No Kid Hungry* shows that children from low-income families are **TWICE AS LIKELY TO BE OBESE** than kids from higher-income families.

ABOUT AAFB Established in 1984, AAFB is a private, nonprofit organization serving five member food banks and a network of nearly 1,200 food pantries and agencies. AAFB partners with Feeding America and other hunger relief organizations nationwide to end food insecurity in our state and country. For more than 30 years, AAFB's programs, including transportation, the hunger hotline and getting children meals in school, have helped alleviate hunger in Arizona. Our advocacy efforts target reducing the need for emergency food from the charitable system. For more information about our organization and work, visit our website at www.azfoodbanks.org.

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