



# Greater Chicago Food Depository

Public Policy and Advocacy

February 23, 2017 | Advocacy 101

**Members of the GCFD public policy team leading today's webinar:**

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## KEY FACTS

- Every year, 812,100 people in Cook County – 1 in 6 – receives food from one of the Food Depository's member agency grocery or meal programs.
- Nearly 255,000 children – 1 in 5 – are food insecure in Cook County.
- 70 million pounds of food distributed last year.



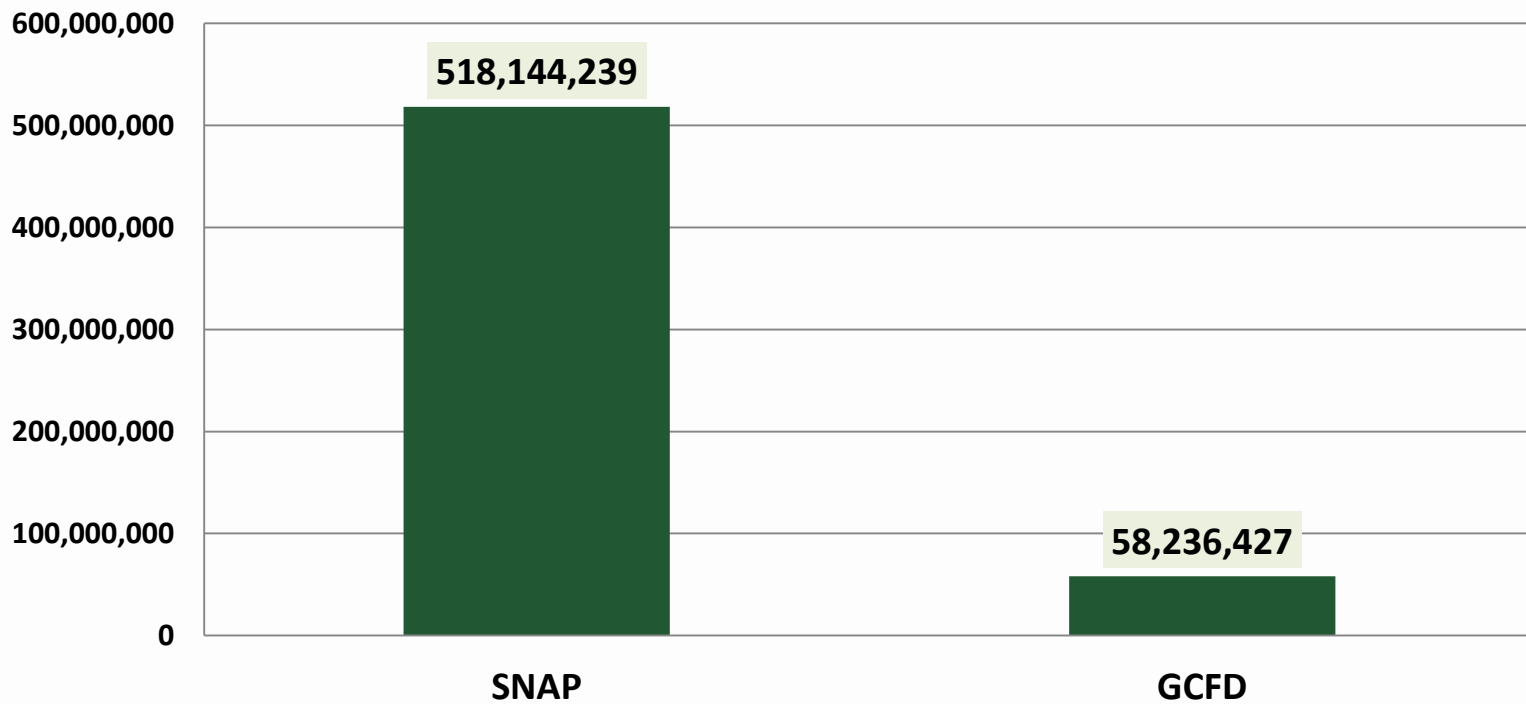
# FOOD: HUNGER RELIEF SUPPLY CHAIN



# THE LIMITS OF THE FOOD DEPOSITORY



Number of Meals Provided in Cook County in FY2016



# THE FACE OF HUNGER IN COOK COUNTY



- 57 % of client households include at least one person who has been **employed in the last 12 months.**
- 91 % of clients have a **roof over their head.**
- 39 % of client households include a **child.**
- 36 % of client households include an **older adult.**
- 18 % of client households include a **current or retired Armed Forces member.**



# THE FACE OF HUNGER IN COOK COUNTY: MAKING DIFFICULT CHOICES



- 62 % of clients chose between paying for food and paying medical bills.
- 73 % of clients chose between paying for food and paying their utility bills.
- 59 % of clients chose between paying for food and paying their rent or mortgage.



Partner with and strengthen community based responses to hunger and its root causes

COMMUNITY

2020 Plan

NOURISHING OUR COMMUNITY

FOOD

VOICE

Expand access to nutritious food

Inspire and engage our community to lift its collective voice to end hunger



**Advocacy** is any action taken to influence government policy and can include a range of activities.

- As a nonprofit organization, we have a right and a responsibility to advocate for or against decisions that could help or hurt our mission.
- Public policy and advocacy work is critical to the mission of the Food Depository.

## ADVOCACY TAKES DIFFERENT FORMS



### Legislative Lobbying

- Working for or against a specific piece of legislation at federal, state, or local level
- Nonprofits are allowed to engage in legislative lobbying, up to certain limits depending on organization's budget

### Administrative Advocacy

- Trying to influence administrative decisions on policy and program implementation
- Under Federal law, nonprofits can do *unlimited* administrative advocacy – as long as the purpose is not to influence legislation

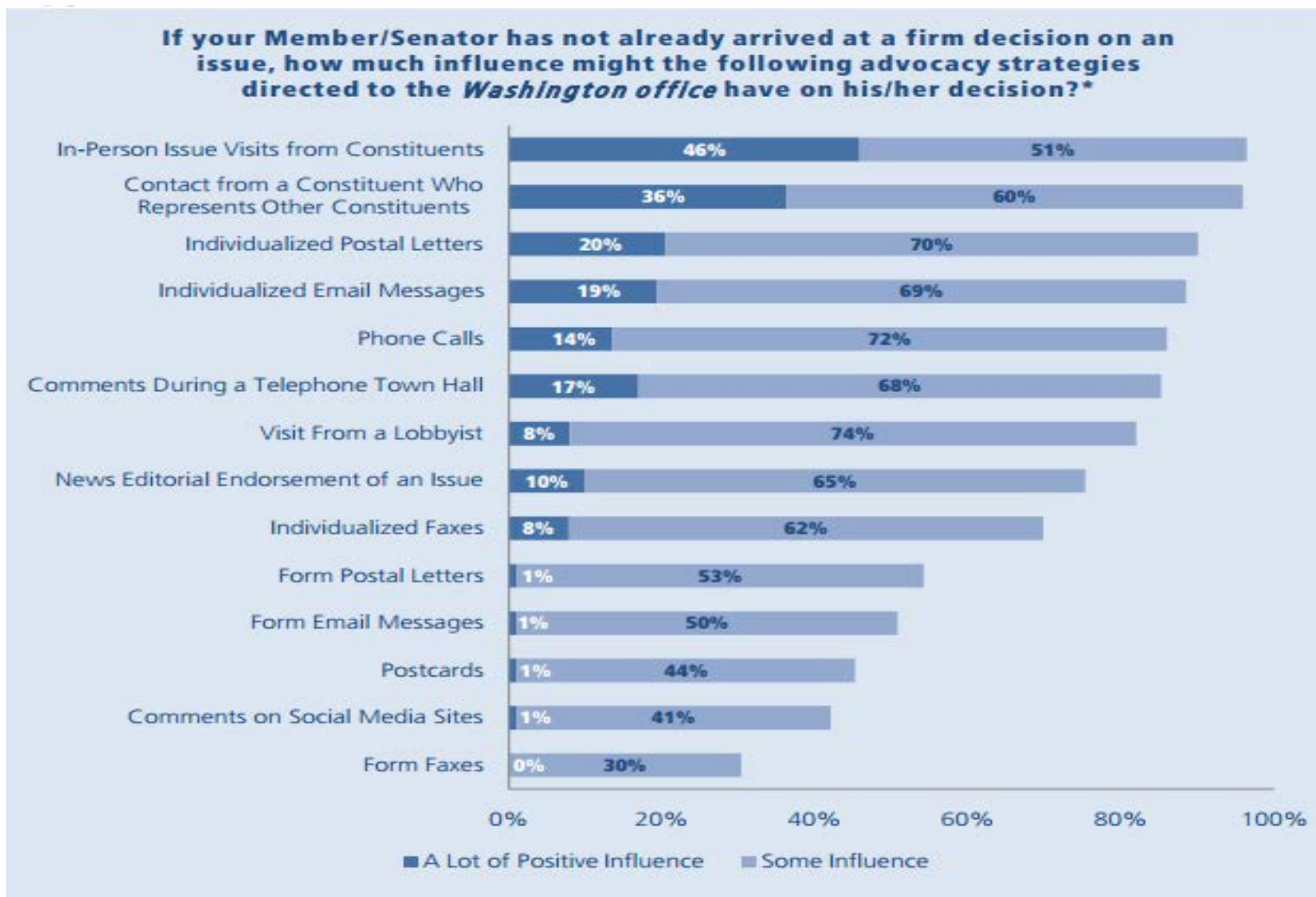
### Election-Related Activities

- Nonprofits may engage in nonpartisan voter registration, education and get-out-the-vote activities
- Supporting or opposing specific candidate(s) or political parties is *never allowed* for 501(c)(3) organizations

### Other

- There are many other forms of allowable advocacy — including public education and research (does not involve legislative lobbying)

# DO OUR ADVOCACY EFFORTS REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

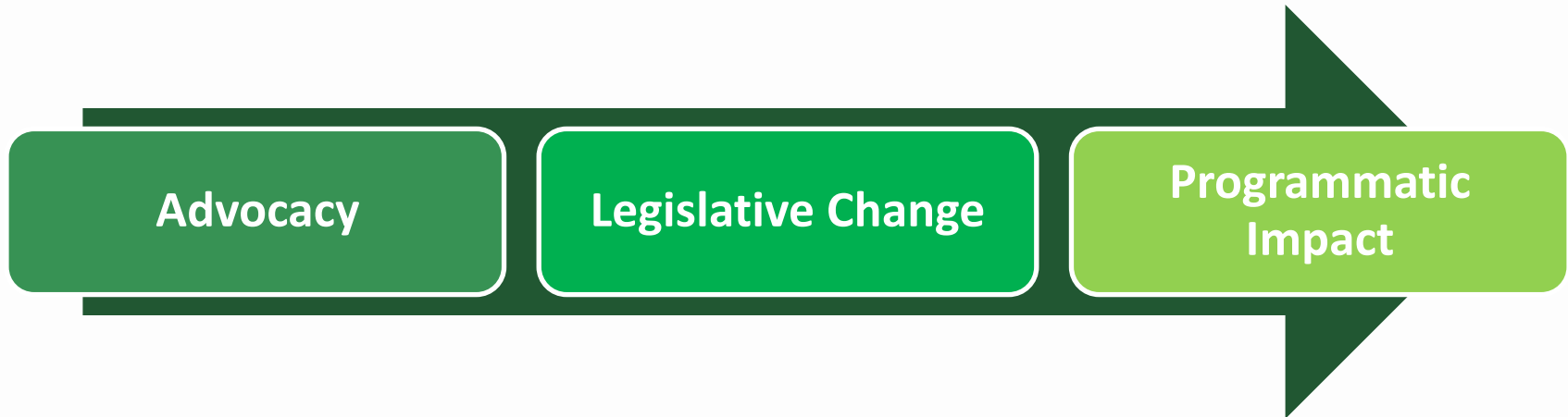


\*Question was asked only of senior managers and mail staffers. Their responses are aggregated (n=194).



**Advocacy is part of the Food Depository's strategic plan.**

It is not just the responsibility of public policy & advocacy staff, but is integrated throughout GCFD and encouraged among our partners.

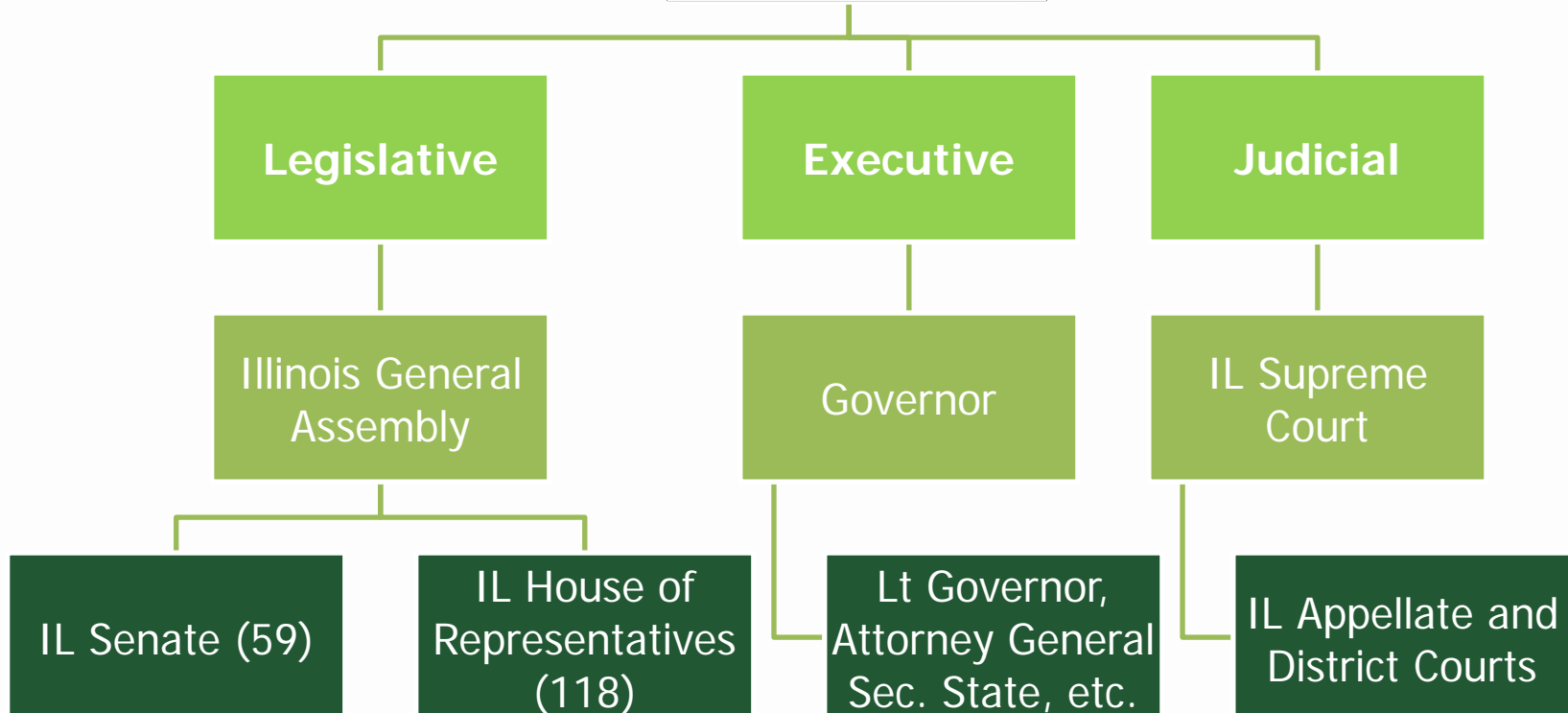


### Example: TEFAP

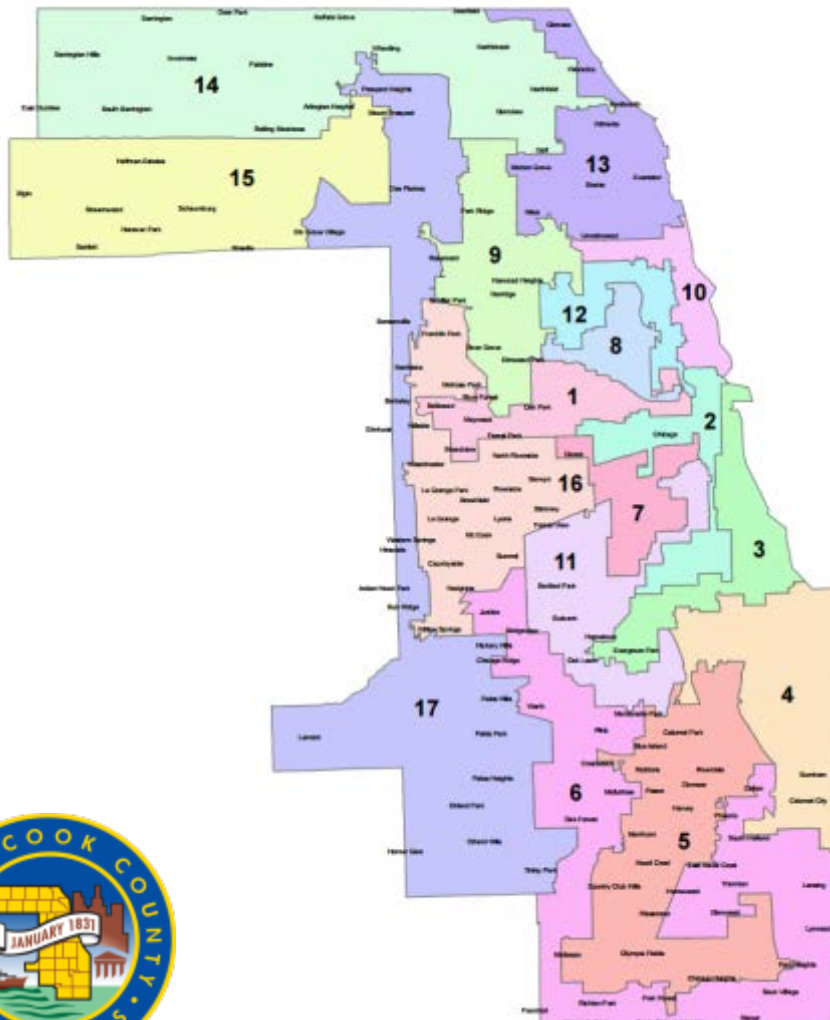


# THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT







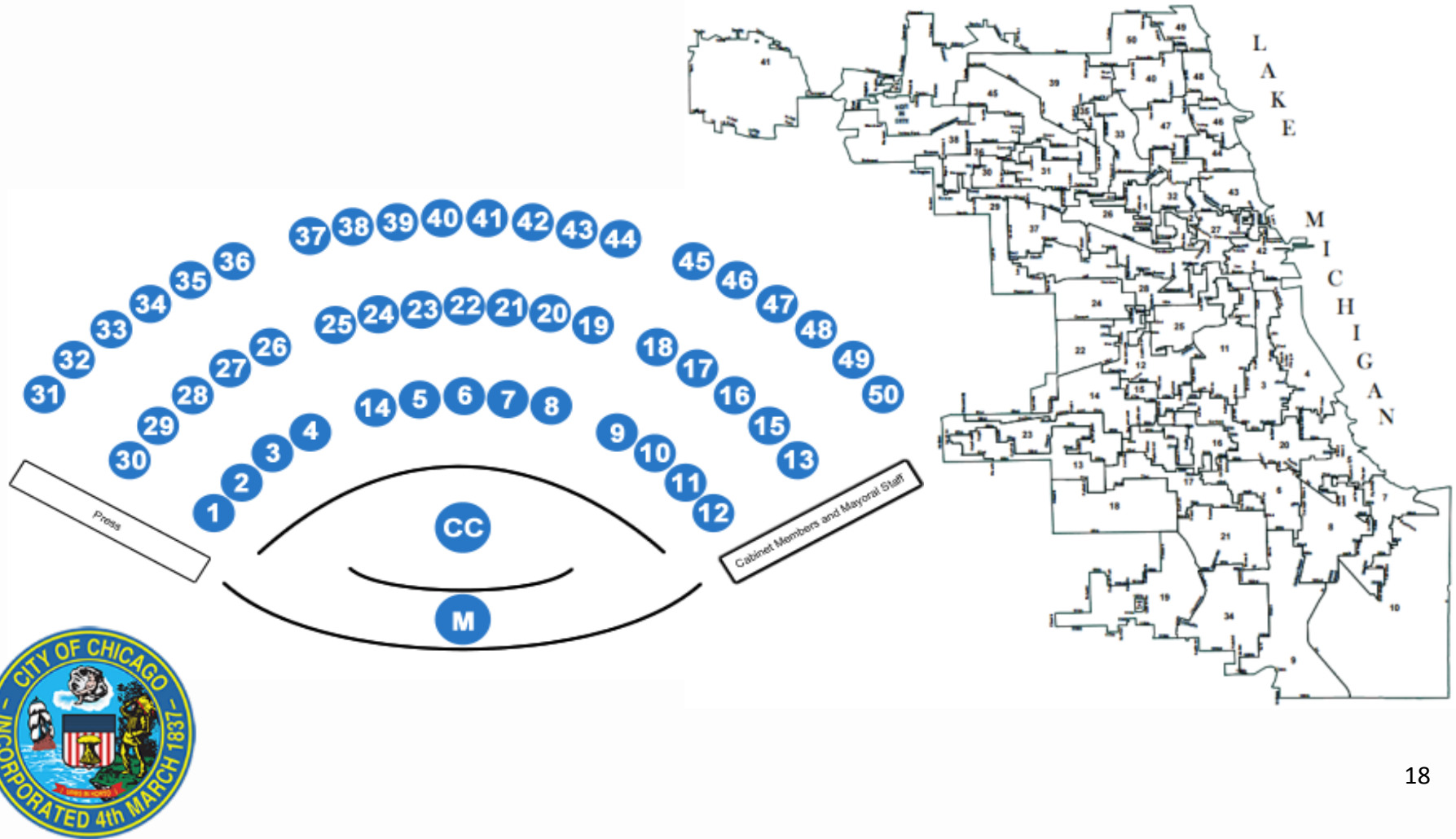


County Board  
President

17 County  
Commissioners



# CITY OF CHICAGO GOVERNMENT



Created by legislation in 2010 the **Commission to End Hunger** was created with the mission of developing a two-year plan to end hunger in Illinois.

The Commission is **comprised of legislators and community leaders** who have committed themselves to developing this action plan. GCFD Executive Director, Kate Maehr, is the co-chair of the commission along with Janice Glen, Acting Director of the Illinois Department of Human Rights.

The work is organized into one of three working groups:

- 1) *No Kid Hungry***
- 2) *Emergency Food System***
- 3) *Benefits Access***

For more info including the Commission's annual reports, please visit:

<https://www.illinois.gov/gov/endhunger>

The **Cook County Food Access Plan** is a two-year strategy to combat food insecurity in Suburban Cook County. The Cook County Food Access Task Force is charged with executing the plan by implementing three food insecurity alleviation projects:

- ***Food as Medicine***: Strengthen the connection between food access and health by conducting food insecurity screenings and referrals at all Cook County Health and Hospital System Facilities.
- ***Nourishing Minds***: Improve school children's access to nutrition programs like summer meals and school breakfast.
- ***Feeding Prosperity***: Strengthen the use of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and incentives at farmers markets in high food insecure areas.

This plan identifies initial and immediate steps toward embedding equitable and sustainable food access system support at the county level.

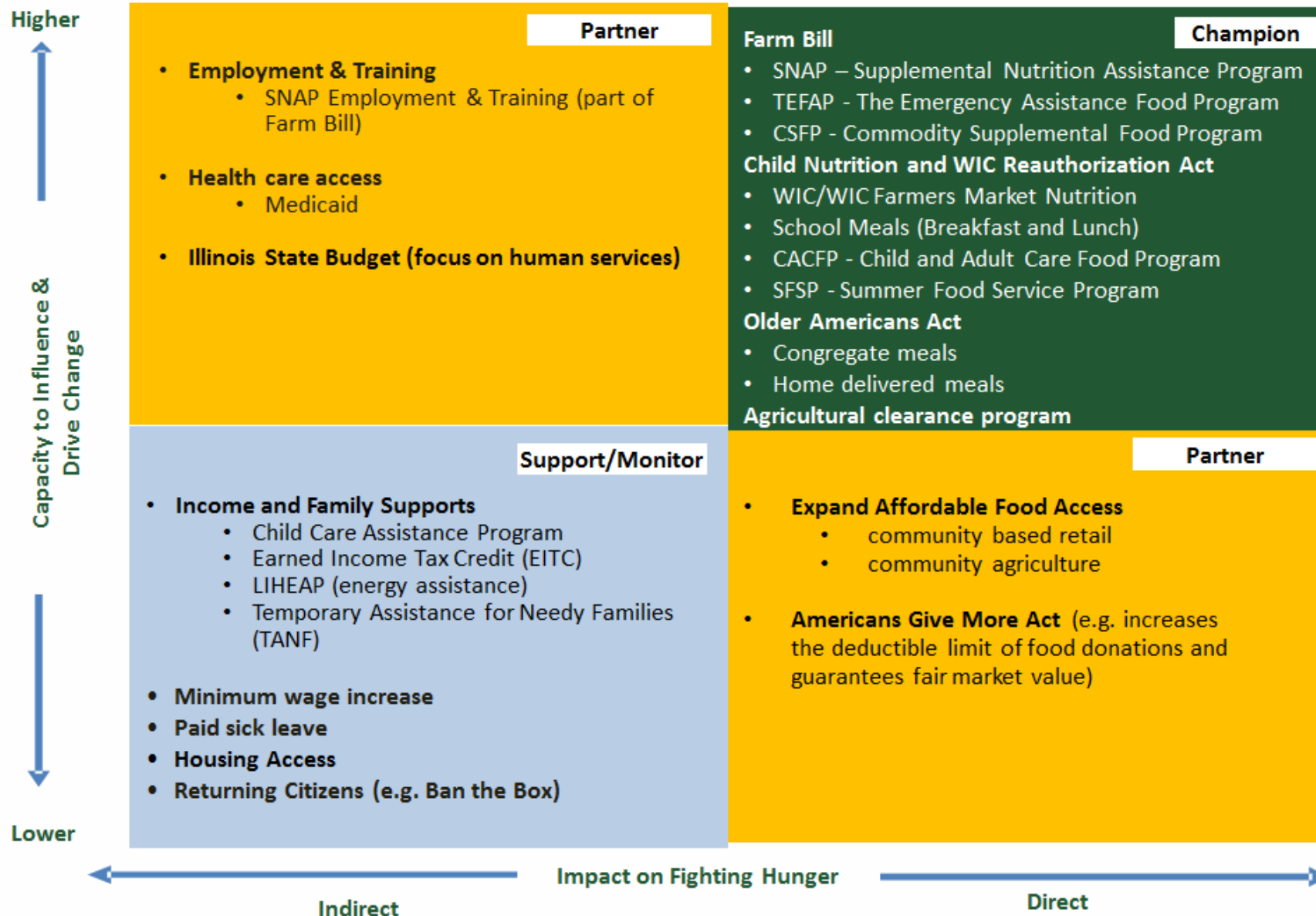
Housed in the County President's office, this task force will be led by staff from the Greater Chicago Food Depository and will enable Cook County to accountably and transparently address the food access issues that affect the health, education, and prosperity of its residents.

For more info, please visit: <https://www.chicagosfoodbank.org/blog/food-depository-county-unveil-food-access-plan/>

# Prioritizing Our Issues: Advocacy Heat Map



GREATER  
CHICAGO  
FOOD  
DEPOSITORY



### •**Fight Hunger Through Spending Legislation**

- FY18 appropriations should support strong funding for TEFAP, CSFP, and home delivered meals and congregate meal programs for seniors
- Support a summer EBT program

### •**SNAP:** Oppose block granting or placing time limits on SNAP eligibility

### •**Ensure Next Farm Bill Reduces Hunger:**

- Bill sets food policy and support for numerous critical nutrition and agriculture programs
- Current bill expires in 2018 – hearings will begin in 2017

### •**Protect Access to Health Care:** Focus on access to Medicaid and assistance for lower-income households

### •**Tax Reform**

- Protect tax incentives that help generate donations to nonprofit organizations
- Protect and expand the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC)

### •Food Assistance for Hungry Students in Vocational Programs (HB 3211)

- Background:** Rising cost of higher education and scarce financial aid impacts many students and 48 percent of college students report experiencing food insecurity.
- Legislation:** This bill will ensure SNAP eligibility for low-income adults pursuing a “Perkins Pathway” career and technical education (CTE) certificate or degree at a community college.
- Potential Impact:** Over 40,000 students could become eligible for SNAP.

### •SNAP Related Work

- SNAP Employment and Training :** Working with state to improve current program structure to maximize services to state residents.
- **Protect Access to SNAP:** Oppose time limits for unemployed and underemployed adults (ABAWD’s) and oppose bills that seek to restrict access to food assistance.

### •Reactivate the Hunger Caucus

- Purpose:** Decrease the human and economic impact of hunger on Illinois residents and communities by raising awareness; fostering cooperative relations between government and charitable organizations; and removing barriers to nutritional assistance programs.
- Currently has about 30 Members of the Illinois General Assembly

### DIRECT SERVICE

Hunger Walk  
Hunger Action Month  
Volunteer & Donate

### INDIRECT ACTIONS

Social/Digital Media Engagement

### BUILDING SUPPORT

Friend-Raising  
Fundraising  
Letter Writing

### ELECTED OFFICIAL ENGAGEMENT

DC & Springfield Lobbying  
Elected Official Meetings  
Call-Ins & Action Alerts



## VOICE: HUNGER SUMMIT



- Date: Tuesday, May 16 & Wednesday, May 17, 2017
- Location: President Abraham Lincoln Springfield: A Doubletree by Hilton
- Guest Count: 300 – 350



# VOICE: HUNGER WALK



## 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Hunger Walk

- NEW Date: Saturday, **September 16, 2017**
- Location: **Jackson Park**
- **Largest** one-day anti-hunger event
- Last year's event brought in nearly **12,000** participants



## THREE THINGS YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW!



### 1. Make sure you're signed up to receive our emails:

- Visit <https://www.chicagosfoodbank.org>

### 2. Learn who your elected officials are:

- Visit <https://www.chicagosfoodbank.org/advocacy/> and click 'Find Elected Officials'

### 3. Mark your calendar & sign up to get more info:

- May 16-17: Hunger Summit and Lobby Day – Springfield, IL
- <https://www.chicagosfoodbank.org/hunger-summit-save-date/>



Thank you

# APPENDIX

## CHAMPION – ADDITIONAL POLICY DETAIL



### Farm Bill

- **SNAP** - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - formerly Food Stamps
  - Provides funds to purchase food to over 2 million in Illinois
  - Many administrative and legislative advocacy opportunities
- **TEFAP** - The Emergency Assistance Food Program
  - Current funding: \$9,328,286 (entitlement); \$12,611,065 (administrative)
  - Administered by the food banks in Illinois
- **CSFP** - Commodity Supplemental Food Program
  - Is being transitioned to an older adults only food package program

### Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act

- **WIC / WIC Farmers Market Nutrition**
  - Provides healthy foods and support services to pregnant women, new moms, infants & kids up to age 5
  - Illinois has a 52.5% coverage rate – lower than national average
- **School Meals (Breakfast and Lunch)**
  - SB 2393 – require breakfast after the bell in districts with high % low-income
  - School lunch program faces some threats in the Child Nutrition Reauthorization
- **CACFP - Child and Adult Care Food Program**
  - Provides funding for afterschool meals (Kids Cafes)
- **SFSP - Summer Food Service Program**
  - Provides funding for child summer feeding programs
- **Agricultural clearance program**
  - Direct locally grown surplus crops (largely fruits and vegetables) to food banks

### Older Americans Act (Title III - Nutrition Services)

- **Congregate meals**
  - Provides funding for meals and related services in a variety of congregate settings.
- **Home delivered meals**
  - Provides funding for delivery of meals and related services to seniors who are homebound due to illness, disability, and/or geographic isolation.
- The Older Americans Act of 2016 was signed into law in April 2016 and reauthorizes these programs for FY17-FY19 – as such, there will likely not be much action on these programs for the next few years

### **Employment & Training**

- SNAP Employment & Training (part of Farm Bill) – USDA – at local level IDHS
  - Provides SNAP recipients opportunities to gain skills and experiences toward a job or a better job
- Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
  - The nation's workforce education and training law and aims to address skill gaps in the workforce and includes youth employment programs

### **Health care access**

- Medicaid and All Kids cover health care for low income people of all ages - Illinois expanded healthcare coverage to adults without children as part of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) implementation
- Implement customizable food insecurity screening at hospitals in Cook County

### **Illinois State Budget (focus on human services)**

- Stopgap budget passed in June 2016 provides only 65% of funding for services delivered in FY16 and the first half of FY17



### Income and Family Supports

- **Child Care Assistance Program**

- Provides low-income, working families with access to quality, affordable child care. Families are required to pay part of the cost of care through a sliding scale co-payment that is based on family size and income
- In 2015, the state made significant changes to the program, severely limiting CCAP eligibility for new applicants in Illinois

- **Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)**

- The EITC is a refundable tax credit for low and moderate-income working individuals and couples – particularly targeted at those with children. The amount of credit depends on your income and the number of children in your household
- There is a federal EITC and Illinois also has a state EITC that is 10 percent of the federal credit and is refundable

- **LIHEAP (energy assistance)**

- Provides low-income households assistance paying for heating costs, offers crisis assistance, and also provides weatherization assistance to some homeowners
- Some GCFD member agencies also act as LIHEAP application sites

- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)**

- TANF is a block grant that provides funding to states to provide income support to low-income families with children, as well as to provide a wide range of services (e.g., work-related activities, child care, and refundable tax credits)
- Participation in this program has declined rapidly nationwide following welfare reform enacted in 1996. At the state level, there are opportunities to advocate for program changes as the state is given significant latitude in how the program is administered

### **Minimum Wage Increase**

- In 2014, the City of Chicago approved a phased-in minimum wage increase that will reach \$13/hour by 2019. In October 2016, Cook County passed an ordinance requiring profit and non-profit employers throughout the county to raise starting minimum wages to \$10 per hour by July 1, 2017 and increase \$1 per year until \$13 per hour in 2020. There have been efforts at the state-level, with little success to date.

### **Paid Sick Leave**

- This policy work is focused on increasing the number of workers – particularly low-wage, hourly workers – that have access to paid sick leave time to care for themselves and their families when needed.
- In June 2016, the City of Chicago enacted an ordinance that will allow all workers to earn paid sick time that they can use to care for themselves or their family members – it goes into effect in July 2017.

### **Housing Access**

- Issues include affordable housing, restoration of homelessness prevention funding, investing in homeless youth programing, and efforts to protect people affected by foreclosure from being pushed into homelessness.

### **Returning Citizens (Ban the Box)**

- This policy aims to remove employment barriers for people with prior arrest or criminal records by prohibiting questions about criminal background at the first stage of the job hiring process – often referred to as “Ban the Box”.
- The City of Chicago and the State of Illinois passed laws in this area that took effect in early 2015 and both laws prohibit private employers from making criminal inquiries until after an applicant has been notified of his or her selection for an interview (where the employer does not conduct an interview, it must wait until after making a conditional offer).