



MELISSA HURTADO

— CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR • 16TH DISTRICT —

Senate Bill 1025

Office of Food Security and Affordability

As introduced February 10th, 2026

SUMMARY

SB 1025 establishes the Office of Food Security and Affordability (OFSA) as an independent public entity. The OFSA will be led by a Governor-appointed, Senate-confirmed director to coordinate California's efforts to address food insecurity. The office will work with state agencies to expand outreach for food assistance programs, operate a 24-hour hunger hotline, and set best practices for food banks and emergency food providers. Additionally, the OFSA will create a dedicated Food Security and Affordability Fund to receive public and private funds to support those efforts.

PROBLEM

Food insecurity persists across California due to fragmented program delivery, uneven outreach, and a lack of centralized coordination among food assistance entities. Many individuals who are eligible for nutrition programs—particularly seniors, students, people with disabilities, and newly unemployed workers—are unaware of available resources or face barriers to enrollment. Geographic and demographic gaps leave entire communities food insecure, despite the existence of many assistance programs. Emergency situations further strain local food systems, exposing weaknesses in coordination and response. Without a single accountable entity, the state has struggled to align resources, reduce inefficiencies, and ensure equitable access to food assistance.

BACKGROUND

Food insecurity is defined as limited or uncertain access to enough food for a healthy, active life. Further, food insecurity affects more than 1 in 5 Californians — approximately 8.8 million people. Although California produces nearly half of the nation's fruits and vegetables, 22 percent of households and 27 percent of households with children are food insecure. As of September 2024, 31 percent of Hispanic/Latine households (33 percent with children) and 35 percent of Black households (43 percent with children) experience food insecurity, reflecting deep structural inequities.

Economic pressures compound the crisis — in 2021, the average meal cost \$3.67, and California's annual food budget shortfall totaled \$2,658,795,000. Food insecurity undermines health, educational attainment, and long-term economic stability, even as the state continues investing in nutrition assistance programs.

Multiple state agencies administer food and nutrition assistance programs, including, but not limited to, CalFresh, CalWORKs, the California Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), school nutrition programs, and emergency food assistance programs. While these programs play a critical role in reducing hunger, their administration across different agencies has resulted in fragmented delivery systems. As a result, coordination among state and local entities is often inconsistent.

Despite program availability, many eligible Californians experience barriers to access. These barriers reduce enrollment, contribute to food waste, and weaken the state's ability to respond effectively during emergencies. Establishing an independent Office of Food Security and Affordability will improve coordination across programs, increase enrollment, reduce food waste, strengthen emergency response, and promote equitable access to food assistance statewide.

SOLUTION

SB 1025 establishes the Office of Food Security and Affordability (OFSA) in order to coordinate a statewide approach to reducing hunger and improving access to nutritious food. Through data-driven gap analyses, strategic planning, public-private partnerships, and coordinated emergency response, the Office will have an emphasis on underserved communities and will create an accountability framework to address food insecurity throughout California.

SUPPORT

Community Action Partnership of Kern (Sponsor)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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