

Advocacy Update 1.17.2020



NTFB VOICE Advocacy Update

ADVOCATING FOR A HUNGER-FREE, HEALTHY NORTH TEXAS

In Brief -

- Point-in-time Homeless Person Count
- Trade deal with China signed
- Bill filed to reduce school food waste
- School meals: Healthy standards to be rolled back...how do you feel?

Point-In-Time Homelessness Count

North Texas Cities in Dallas and Collin County are preparing for the Point-in-time homelessness count. Each year the Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance utilize volunteers to walk the city streets to speak with and count the number of people living without homes.

This year the count takes place on Thursday January 23 from 7pm to midnight.

[If you or a team would like to participate, please go here to sign register and receive the on-line training.](#) Please keep in mind this is for adults only.

Please keep in mind that this count is put on by the Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance, NOT the US Census Bureau. The US Census Bureau will be doing their homeless persons count in March for the 2020 Census.

If you have the slightest desire to want to participate this year, I highly encourage you to do so.

Trade Deal with China Reached

At 10:30am CST on Wednesday, Trump and Chinese officials signed the much anticipated "phase one" trade pact today at the White House. This deal has a \$40 billion commitment from Beijing to purchase US farm goods.

However, the US is expected to leave the tariffs in place on Chinese goods. Trump's trade advisors have said "there is no agreement for future reduction in tariffs," which leaves room for slow trade and many skeptics to worry about fuel for a new trade war in the future.

Phase one saw a lowered expectation on the deal, but it got trade moving again. In "phase two" trade officials hope to see negotiations on addressing China's massive subsidies for state-owned businesses and industrial policies not in alignment with workers' rights. The whole basis of the trade war in the first place. But, with an election looming, many are skeptical that the US can afford to push too hard.

America's pork farmers are excited for this new deal. Because of the 2019 trade wars with China, US pork producers missed 'an opportunity of a lifetime.' The African swine fever** epidemic destroyed hog herds in Asia. This forced Chinese consumers to buy pork from the European Union and Brazil, unable to turn to US producers to fill the gap. Currently 575 Million pounds of frozen US pork is being stored by the USDA, an all-time record, and food banks are overrun with various pork products as well.

**African Swine Fever (ASF) is a virus that is easily transmitted through physical contact as well as ticks. It cannot be transmitted to humans. There is no vaccine for ASF. Once an outbreak occurs it is difficult to control. There are two forms of ASF, the very pig-deadly acute form and the pretty-bad chronic form. Symptoms of the acute form of ASF mimic those of human Ebola, as both are hemorrhagic viruses.

Pingree Bill asks for school food waste solutions grant money

H. R. 5607

"School Food Recovery Act of 2020"

To amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out a grant program to make grants to eligible local educational agencies to carry out food waste reduction programs, and for other purposes.

School food waste bills are not a new thing, but this one is different! This bill is asking for a grant program to be established that will give school some financial resources to help them use best practices to reduce their meal waste. Most of the other ones that have been filed do not provide schools with financial resources to help with food waste reduction.

The grant program would give schools the opportunity to get money to put towards:

- Planning a food waste measurement, prevention, and reduction project.

- Carrying out activities under such a project.
- Providing training to support such a project.
- Purchasing equipment to support such a project.
- Offering food waste education to students enrolled in such eligible local educational agency.

Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act proposed rolled back

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Today, Friday, Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue [announced a proposed rule change that schools will no longer have to meet the number of fruits and vegetables required at each meal as written in the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act guidelines.](#)

As a reminder, a *rule change* is a way to change the law, without the approval of congress.

Those who are in favor of the roll-back say that requiring less "healthy" foods will pave the way for more appetizing foods that children want to eat and reduce food waste. Additionally, food companies are happy about this potential change as many school meal providers have to have two product lines to satisfy requirements. (Ex. one line for school pizza sauce that abides by the low-sodium requirements and then another line for the store-consumer brand with higher sodium for improved taste).

Advocates for keeping the healthier standards remark that for many low-income students, school meals are the only healthy meal option they receive each day. They also remark that food waste was a problem before the updated healthier standards and criticize the administration for using waste as an excuse to satisfy food industry producers' complaints.

How do you feel about this? TELL ME

Questions or Comments?

Also, let me know if you want to know more about the Swine Viruses.

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