

## Advocacy Update 7/17/2018

**1. @NTFBVoice is Live!** Follow all things NTFB advocacy and public policy on Twitter. We follow back.

**2. Farm Bill Update:** The Farm Bill is still waiting to go “into conference” where hand selected members of congress will decide what parts make it into the final bill. Sorting out the final bill follows a few rules. Typically, for differences between the Senate and the House bills, they may only select the House or the Senate version to put in the final version. For items that are the same between the two bills, they may not choose a different option and must go with what is written. Key word here is “Typically”, as we are all aware we are witnessing an atypical policy & procedure for government action this year, so let’s see.

What we can do: We are continuing to remind our members of congress that hunger never helped anyone get a job. The strict work requirements in the House version would cause more harm than good, and we’d like them to listen to us as experts on hunger. Strong opportunities to influence will begin when the members of the conference committee are selected.

**3. FDA Crackdown:** The head of the FDA said it will move to “crack down” on the use of the term “milk” for non-dairy items such as almond milk and soy milk. Dairy groups contend that the use of the word “milk” has caused the major decline in their industry because consumers are confused. The lead member of congress on this is Senator Tammy Baldwin from.....Wisconsin.

**4. Summer Meals Fraud:** The US Government Accountability Office has told the House Education & Workforce Committee it has not tried hard enough to get accurate summer meal counts from the USDA.

“The USDA doesn’t properly oversee the safety of the sites where meals are served, and has failed to ease the administrative burden placed on the organizations that carry out local programs”

The USDA Office of Inspector General has said they have found issues with improper payments including inaccurate meal counts, unallowable expenses, and meals served outside meal times.

Texas was one of the 3 states audited. No word on what is to come of the inspections or any corrective actions. Having ironclad numbers and expenses keeps NTFB off of any hot seat.

**5. Winter (State Legislative Session) is Coming:** Trisha, Erica, and I met with State Representative Jeff Leach (House District 67). The advocacy talk centered around the Surplus Agriculture Act within the Texas State Budget. A new State budget will start coming together over the next few months.

Over the biennium (two years) Feeding Texas receives 9.1M dollars to help cover the costs of picking, bagging, and transportation of surplus produce from various southern farmers, and get it to Texas Food Banks.

Helping supplement and shape the diet options of food insecure individuals was definitely something that spoke to the Representative. Though he does not serve on the budget or finance committee, having him as a strong voice for Texas Food Banks and produce towards his fellow legislators is a win.

\*\*Gathering correct produce poundage data and from where its sourced will become incredibly important as we build our case to the legislature. I’ll be leaning on all to help direct me to this data when the time comes.



**6. Locally:** The Faith Based Community Action Team is hosting an event on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Below are details if you have the ability to attend or know someone who would benefit.

**Faith Community School Nutrition Policy Round Table**

**What are the ways the faith community can promote expansion of free meals in local schools?**

Speakers and Panelists include:

- Rev. Gerald Britt - Pastor, Preacher, Advocate - City Square
- Dan Micciche - School Board Trustee - Dallas ISD
- Tabitha Branum - Deputy Superintendent Richardson ISD
- Brad Trudeau - Director Student Nutrition Services, Garland ISD
- Dr. Kim Broadway – Principal - Mesquite ISD
- Ashley Hutto - President - School Health Advisory Council, Dallas ISD

Location:

Baylor Scott & White Health and Wellness Center  
 4500 Spring Avenue  
 Dallas 75210  
 August 23, 2018  
 1:30 – 3:00 PM

Until next time,  
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	<p><b>Valerie Stone Hawthorne, PhD</b>          Government Relations Director          North Texas Food Bank          Direct: 832.851.0303</p>
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