

# LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

## REDUCE HUNGER & IMPROVE NUTRITION

Texas has the second-highest rate of food insecurity in the nation. To increase access to food and improve health outcomes, the Texas Legislature should:

### Streamline SNAP 6-Mo Eligibility Checks



6-month periodic reporting is a proven tool to reduce workload and administrative costs, enhance program integrity, and systemically fix our state's current backlog of SNAP applications.

### Implement Summer EBT



1 in 4 Texas children experience hunger, which spikes in the summer because millions of children lose access to school meals. Summer EBT is a new program that would provide low-income families with children \$120 in food benefits during the summer.

### Improve Health Outcomes with Nutritious Food



Food-insecure Medicaid beneficiaries are more likely to develop diet-related illnesses. A streamlined Medicaid reimbursement model that integrates food bank services into our healthcare system would enable doctors to prescribe healthy food, improve health outcomes, and reduce state healthcare costs.

### Modernize the Eligibility System



System errors and glitches within TIERS, the system that underpins SNAP, Medicaid, and TANF, have led to application processing delays and wrongful denials. We support fully funding HHSC's LAR Exceptional Item Request #2 to permanently fix these problems.

## TACKLE THE ROOT CAUSES OF HUNGER

Hunger is closely linked to other issues, including health, housing, financial security, and the food system. We will tackle these issues by supporting legislation to:

- **Strengthen Local Food Systems:** Local food systems can help reduce food insecurity and strengthen resilience by reducing food waste, supporting local economies, and improving food quality.
- **Increase Healthcare Access:** Hunger and health are deeply connected. Individuals facing food insecurity are more likely to experience adverse health effects and face barriers to accessing necessary health services.
- **Ensure Housing Affordability:** Strengthening access to affordable, quality housing allows Texans to allocate more of their monthly budgets to other essential needs like food.
- **Improve Financial Security:** As food prices continue to rise, financial security and economic empowerment are essential to ensure Texan households can meet their nutritious needs.