



Virginia Commission to End Hunger

September 25, 2024, at 2:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

<https://studies.viriniageneralassembly.gov/studies/682>

The Virginia Commission to End Hunger (the Commission) met virtually with Delegate Marcia S. "Cia" Price, chair, presiding.¹ Delegate Price began the meeting by welcoming the commission members and reminding the members that no votes would be taken during the meeting because it was a virtual meeting. Materials presented at the meeting are accessible through the [Commission's meetings webpage](#).

Presentation: Legislative Trends in Addressing Food Insecurity Across the States

Julia Bergamini and Hannah Yates, Attorneys, Division of Legislative Services

Ms. Bergamini and Ms. Yates provided an overview of legislative efforts made in other states to combat food insecurity. The topics discussed included Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) registration, eligibility, and benefits incentive programs; K-12 education, including free school meals, farm-to-school programs and local produce partnerships, purchasing incentives, and accessibility; higher education, including SNAP eligibility; and assisting students in navigating and accessing support services and resources, including hunger-free campus grant programs.

Presentation: Review of Topics Discussed in August Meeting

Julia Bergamini, Attorney, Division of Legislative Services

Ms. Bergamini briefly reviewed the topics discussed during the August 2024 meeting of the Commission. An outline was provided to the Commission members to assist in consideration of legislative priorities and focus areas for the Commission's continued work in the weeks leading up to the 2025 Session of the General Assembly.

Presentation: Area Agencies on Aging

Randi Keesee, Peninsula Agency on Aging

Ms. Keesee briefly described area agencies on aging and the role they serve in individual communities and across the Commonwealth. She explained that the mission of area agencies on aging is to help older adults stay in their homes for as long as possible as they age by providing services such as transportation, meal deliveries, and in-home care. Ms. Keesee discussed food insecurity among older adults and said that over 10 percent of older adults in the Commonwealth face food insecurity. She discussed the barriers older adults face in accessing food, which include financial insecurity and a lack of support networks. Ms. Keesee also discussed the health impacts of food insecurity, which include malnutrition, increased susceptibility to disease, and

¹ **Members Present:** Delegate Marcia S. "Cia" Price (chair), Senator Danica A. Roem, (vice-chair), Senator Christie New Craig, Senator Stella G. Pekarsky, Delegate Bonita G. Anthony, Delegate Rae Cousins, Delegate David Owen, Delegate Kim A. Taylor, Pamela S. Irvine, Vivica I. Kraak, Eddie Oliver, Jennifer Montgomery

Members Absent: Ipyana A. Spencer, Terriel Williams-Ford, Rickeya Feggans, Robin Robbins, Andria D. Timmer

exacerbation of chronic conditions. She provided suggestions for addressing food insecurity among older adults, which include advocating for increased funding and support for food insecurity programs at a state and federal level, enhancing accessibility to programs, raising awareness about the issues related to older adult hunger, and improving access to existing programs.

Presentation: Virginia Hunger Survey Overview

Sarah Steely, Director, No Kid Hungry Virginia

Ms. Steely shared an overview of polling recently conducted by No Kid Hungry Virginia to better understand Virginians' experiences with hunger and food insecurity. Ms. Steely discussed the methodology used to conduct the polling. The polling covered a number of issues related to food insecurity, including the rising cost of food; the impact of food costs on grocery shopping; the impact of food costs on mental health; the trade-offs Virginians make due to the cost of food; the impact of unexpected expenses on hunger; food insecurity in communities; support for bipartisan action on addressing childhood hunger; and use of programs, such as food pantries and SNAP, that extend food budgets.

Member Discussion

Members of the Commission provided a number of ideas for legislation, including food desert mapping, overlooked, easy to resolve accessibility issues related to accessing benefits, a free school lunch pilot program, the hunger free campus act, community gardens, increased minimum SNAP benefits, and increased funding to the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Public Comment

There were no public comments at the meeting.

For more information, see the [*Commission's website*](#) or contact the Division of Legislative Services staff:

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