



Missouri Association for Social Welfare
Hunger Task Force
Newsletter-May 2008



State Legislative Update:

The 2008 State Legislative Session will end Friday, May 16th. The MASW hunger task force was following a few bills as they traveled through the legislative process. As of this week, none of our bills became law. We are now looking towards the 2009 legislative session. Below you will see the bills we were following and where they ended up in the process:

SB 764 - Changes Food Stamp Eligibility

Sen. Yvonne Wilson filed this bill that would have opted Missouri out of the Federal law that bans people with a drug felony conviction from being eligible for food stamps. Over 30 other states have already opted out of this law. This bill received a hearing and was voted Do Pass. It was heard on the floor of the Senate and received some very negative press. It was eventually voted down by the Senate.

HB 2444- Changes Food Stamp Eligibility

Once SB 764 was voted down, Rep. Craig Bland filed a similar bill in the House. Like the Senate Bill, it received a hearing and was voted Do-Pass out of the committee. This bill was put on the perfected calendar list, but by the end of session it was still waiting to be heard on the floor.

HB 2144- Supplemental Food Stamps for Seniors

For the past few years this bill was sponsored by Speaker Jetton, this year though Speaker Jetton passed it onto Rep. Jim Whorton. This bill would increase the minimum food stamp allotment for senior citizens from \$10 a month to \$30 a month. The \$20 increase would come from state funding. This bill received a hearing and was voted Do Pass. It was placed on the bill perfection list but was never called to the floor for a vote.

Hunger Advocacy Day... A Success!

4 of the 6 Missouri Food Banks and over 150 Missouri residents met at the Capitol on March 27, 2008 to educate State Legislators and advocate for increased assistance for nutrition programs.

Look for the 2009 Hunger Advocacy Day to be planned in the near future. We hope you can join us for that day!

New Hunger Task Force Chairperson

We are pleased to announce that Ben DeFeo from the Samaritan Center in Jefferson City, Missouri is the new Hunger Task Force Chairperson. We are grateful for his willingness to serve. Thanks Ben!!

Federal Updates: Farm Bill

House and Senate Conferees came together on May 1st and adopted the titles of the Farm Bill. The nutrition title includes...

- The minimum benefit of \$10 will be raised to about \$14 and indexed for inflation.
- The standard deduction would be raised to about \$144 from \$134 and indexed for inflation.
- The dependent care cap will be eliminated.
- Education and retirement accounts will no longer be counted as a resource under the Food Stamp asset limit.
- The Food Stamp asset limit will be indexed for inflation.
- The Food Stamp Program will be renamed to the "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program" or SNAP.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that Missouri will see

* An influx of \$7 million from the increase in the standard deduction for 243,000 Missourians

* An influx of \$3.1 million for 20,000 Missourians from eliminating the dependent care cap deduction

* An influx of \$700,000 for 26,000 Missourians from the increase in the minimum benefit.

Next Step: The Farm Bill is expected to go the House Rules Committee at 5pm on May 13th in preparation for floor votes on May 14th in the House and then the Senate.

Missouri Hunger Atlas

After many months of research, the interdisciplinary research team from the University of Missouri at Columbia consisting of Sandy Rikoon, Matt Foulkes, Joan Hermsen, and Nikki Raedeke, have released the Missouri Hunger Atlas. The Missouri Hunger Atlas is a comprehensive report on hunger in Missouri, including statistics on Food Stamp and WIC participation, pounds of Food Bank food delivered and obesity for every county in the State. It also includes numerous maps comparing the counties to each other. The Hunger Atlas can be found [here](#).

**** If you are located near St. Louis...**

On Thursday, June 12, 2008 from 9:00am-11:00am at the St. Louis Area Food Bank- MASW is co-hosting a presentation of the Hunger Atlas. This is a **free** event. Light refreshments will be served and you will receive a free copy of the Hunger Atlas. Any questions please contact Christine Woody at 573-690-7662.

Please RSVP to rsvp@stlfoodbank.org or 314-292-6262