

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR ZEV YAROSLAVSKY

November 24, 2009

Recent statistics and studies show that at least one in eight residents of Los Angeles County suffers from hunger and other problems stemming from food insecurity. The economic downturn has greatly magnified the effects of hunger and food insecurity on people from all walks of life in our communities, with especially devastating impacts on children and seniors.

Federal nutritional programs, such as Food Stamps, offer eligible individuals and families critical resources to purchase adequate, nutritious food and, at the same time, stimulate the local economy with their additional purchasing power. These programs are severely underutilized in Los Angeles County.

Additionally, studies have shown hunger and food insecurity to be linked with obesity and overweight issues in low-income households as limited resources and limited access can lead people to maximize their food budgets by purchasing calorie-dense, yet nutrient poor foods or to pay more for fresh foods at corner convenience stores.

A number of Los Angeles County communities are known as “food deserts” (communities that lack access to a major supermarket) or “food swamps” (communities surrounded by a glut of energy-dense but nutrient poor foods) where a

MOTION

MOLINA \_\_\_\_\_

RIDLEY-THOMAS \_\_\_\_\_

YAROSLAVSKY \_\_\_\_\_

ANTONOVICH \_\_\_\_\_

KNABE \_\_\_\_\_

disproportionately high percentage of residents suffer from chronic, preventable diet-related diseases, including diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity. Many of these communities are in need of greater access to healthy, fresh, and good-quality food, including fresh fruits and produce. According to The California Center for Public Health Advocacy, hunger-related issues such as overweight, obesity and physical inactivity cost Los Angeles \$11.8 billion in health care expenditures and lost worker productivity.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles and its partners have issued a report entitled "The Blueprint to End Hunger in Los Angeles" which calls attention to the protracted nature of the problems associated with hunger, food insecurity, and the lack of access to healthy and fresh foods in our community.

This blueprint recommends the County of Los Angeles declare its intent to become a "Hunger-Free Community" to increase awareness of the scourge of hunger and to begin applying comprehensive solutions to this complex problem through planning, education initiatives, the expansion of urban agriculture, support for existing local food development and infrastructure, and the setting of benchmarks for achievement of these goals.

**I, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board:

1. Endorse the efforts of the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles and its partners to end hunger in Los Angeles County;
2. Direct the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to encourage all departments to participate in efforts to coordinate and, where possible, expand the reach of existing anti-hunger programs and initiatives, and to begin examining the relevant recommendations in the "Blueprint to End Hunger" to explore future goals and benchmarks; and

3. Direct the CEO to report back within 60 days.

FGK: S:\Hunger Motion 11.18.09