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43 Percent of Staten Island Food Pantries and Soup Kitchens Unable To Meet Increasing Demand

One in Six Staten Island Children Still Living Below Poverty Line

Hunger Dipped in NY City & State, But Still Higher Than Pre-Recession

Advocates Praise Rep. Dan Donovan for Rejecting Bills that Would Increase Hunger

Fully 43 percent of Staten Island soup kitchens and food pantries were forced to reduce the amount of food distributed, limit their hours of operation, or turn people away due to a lack of resources this year, according to the annual survey of Hunger Free America.

While hunger in New York City and State dropped significantly over the last three years due to the improved economy, the number of city and state residents unable to afford an adequate supply of food is still greater than a decade ago, according to Hunger Free America's analysis of federal data. One in ten working adults in the state and city struggled against hunger despite being employed

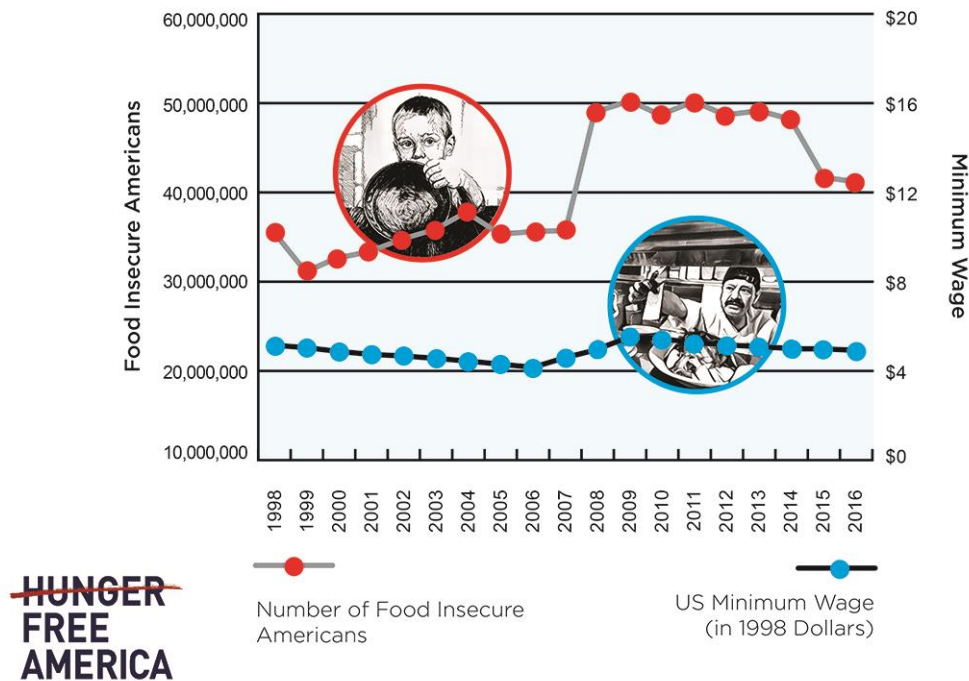
Citywide, the number of New Yorkers struggling against hunger dropped by 15 percent over the past three years, but was still 15 percent higher than a decade ago. In 2014-2016, 1.2 million New Yorkers (one in seven of the city's population) lived in food insecure homes, compared to 1.4 million in 2011-2013 and 1.0 million in 2004-2006.

One in six children, and one out of every eight adults in Staten Island lived below the poverty line in the years 2014-2016. The sample size of Staten Island residents is too small to pull accurate food insecurity data, but the poverty data tracks very closely to poverty data.

Said, Joel Berg, CEO of Hunger Free America, "While unemployment decreased and wages rose during the last few years of the Obama Administration, it is shameful that America, New York State, and New York City all *still* have higher levels of hunger than before the great recession. We still face a nation, state, and local epidemic of the 'working hungry.' It is scandalous that nearly half of the food charities in Staten Island don't have enough resources to meet the current demand. Yet, just at a time when the nation needs even more jobs, even higher wages, and even more robust anti-hunger safety net programs, Republican leaders in Washington are scheming to cut the safety net and eviscerate health care – which would clearly make hunger soar – just to fund even more tax cuts for the mega-wealthy. We are grateful that Rep. Dan Donovan, has, so far, voted against the most harmful components of this agenda."

Hunger Free America, formerly called the New York City Coalition Against Hunger, announced Staten Island specific data analysis at El Centro del Inmigrante Food Pantry, a leading food pantry operated by Project Hospitality, flanked by governmental and nonprofit leaders and community activists.

**AS PURCHASING POWER OF MINIMUM WAGE SINKS,
US HUNGER STAYS SKY HIGH**



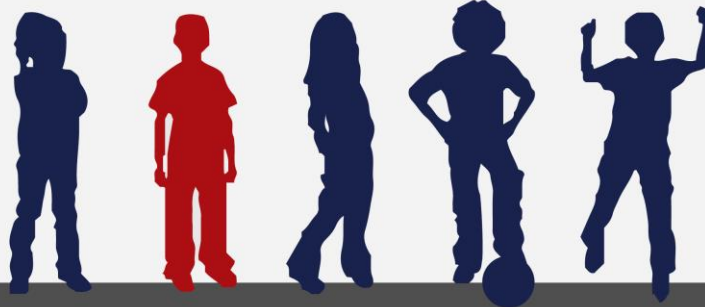
Other findings of the study:

- 50 percent of all Staten Island soup kitchens and food pantries surveyed say that they cannot meet demand.
- 42.9 percent of soup kitchens and food pantries on Staten Island indicated they were seeing increases in the number of people, 28.6 percent indicated it increased greatly from the year before.
- Nearly a third of the emergency food providers across New York City indicated that they do not engage their clients, staff, volunteers, or board members in advocacy (32.3 percent for clients; 29.4 percent for staff, volunteers, and board members).
- President Trump has proposed slashing the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) - formerly called the Food Stamp Program – by \$192 billion, and House Republicans have also proposed major cuts to the program. Yet 93 percent of the people who run food pantries and soup kitchens in New York City said such cuts would cause their clients to struggle even more.

CHILD HUNGER STILL SKY HIGH

NUMBER OF NEW YORK CITY CHILDREN LIVING IN FOOD INSECURE HOMES

Statewide, in 2014-2016, nearly three-quarters of a million children, about one in six, lived in food insecure homes. Citywide during that time period, about 341,266 – or one in five – of the city's children struggled against hunger.



FROM 2014-2016, 1 IN 5 NYC CHILDREN LIVED IN FOOD INSECURE HOMES.

USDA DATA ANALYZED BY HUNGER FREE AMERICA © NOVEMBER 2017

“It is unconscionable that, in the richest city in the history of the world,” said Berg, “one in five children still can’t always count on enough food. It is equally unacceptable that a third of our food pantries and soup kitchens lack the resources to meet the growing need. The sky-high hunger level of New York and America harms health, hampers education, traps families in poverty, fuels obesity, eviscerates hope, and thus drags down our entire economy and places our national security at risk. Hunger harms us all. In contrast, ending hunger lifts us all. We must build the movement needed and force our political system to enact the economic policies and social programs necessary to end U.S. hunger once and for all.”

The study, “Working New York Still Hungry: New York City and State Hunger Report,” is available on Hunger Free America’s website, <http://www.hungerfreeamerica.org/media-research/research>. The public can donate to, or volunteer with, Hunger Free America at www.hungerfreeamerica.org.

Said Terry Troia, the Executive Director of Project Hospitality: "Project Hospitality served 1,760,000 last year to more than 24,000 Staten Island families. Low wage working families choose between food on their table, roof over their heads and clothes on their backs. As pantries we are a band-aid to a gaping wound called poverty. Livable wages and affordable housing are the long term solutions to the suffering caused by hunger in our borough and throughout the city"

Staten Island resident Barbara Hart, who is an activist with Hunger Free America’s Food Action Board, said, “Hunger does not discriminate. Ending Hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition are great acts of humanity. There’s no better time to support Hunger Free America than right now.”

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