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CONTACT:
Nicole Aber, (646) 627-7741
Naber@hungerfreeamerica.org

Number of Food Insecure in Queens Rises from 2012-13 to 2015-17

70 Percent of Queens Emergency Food Programs Report Increase in Number of People Served in 2018

NYC Hunger Falls Over Last Six Years but Still Far Higher than 2005-07

Advocates Call on Congress to Increase SNAP Benefits in Pending Farm Bill

Nearly nine percent of Queens residents were food insecure in 2015-2017, according to federal data analyzed by Hunger Free America. This includes five percent of children, nearly seven percent of working adults, and nearly nine percent of seniors in the borough.

While the number of people in New York City who are food insecure decreased over the last six years, the number remains higher than the recession at a whopping 1 million New Yorkers. The number of Queens residents who experienced food insecurity in 2015-2017 totals 202,417. This is up from 192,416 Queens residents in 2012-2014. However, the number is relatively stagnant compared to a decade ago, when 200,366 Queens residents were food insecure.

Hunger Free America's new report, which contains data on all five boroughs in addition to the NYC Metropolitan region and New York State, also found that it would cost approximately \$569 million annually on top of what is already spent to eradicate hunger in New York City.

"The cost of ending it isn't nearly as high as the cost of accepting mass hunger, since hunger makes it more difficult for children to learn, workers to work, and older Americans to stay

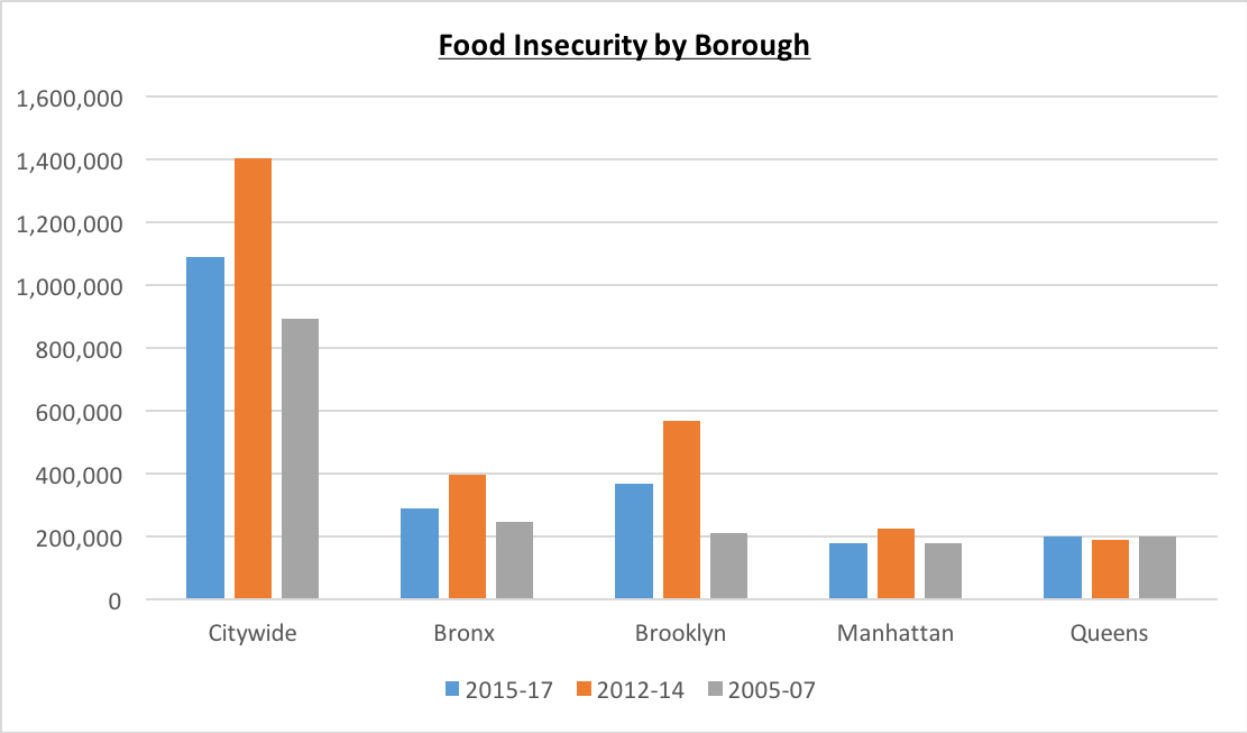
independent,” said Hunger Free America CEO Joel Berg. “Given the nation’s epidemic of working hungry and recent cutbacks in safety net programs, it’s clear that there is no way that even the most generous charities can pay for the \$1 billion tab of erasing hunger in the region. That’s why our solutions must go way beyond charity, and federal, state, and local elected officials should focus on creating jobs, raising wages, and ensuring an adequate safety net. In particular, Congress should use the pending Farm Bill to increase funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, and certainly reject conservative proposals to slash it.”

According to Hunger Free America’s annual survey of Emergency Food Programs, 70 percent of Emergency Food Programs in Queens experienced an increase in the number of people served during the last year. Berg announced the data Wednesday afternoon at Flushing’s Affinity Health Plan, which provides SNAP benefits outreach to the community.

Denise J. Pesich, Vice President & Chief Marketing Officer of Affinity Health Plan commented, “Affinity Health Plan is a proud supporter of Hunger Free America’s movement to enact policies and programs which advocate for the end of domestic hunger, here and across the country. Sufficient access to nutritious food, for all New Yorkers, is the reason for this collaboration.”

Sixty-five percent of respondents to Hunger Free America’s survey also reported an increase in the number of families with children as well as senior citizens who accessed their services.

“In Far Rockaway, we served over 2,000 a month in our food pantry line,” said Nat Liengsiriwat, Case Management Services Director of AIDS Center of Queens County. “The benefits they get from our government are not enough to sustain a family of four or more, and the elderly cannot survive on the social security and food stamps they receive. There must be a better way to serve the community. We only have a satellite office in Far Rockaway so people line up outside our office through rain, snow, or under the sun during the hot summer days.



The study, “The Uneaten Big Apple: Hunger’s High Cost in NYC,” is available on Hunger Free America’s website: hungerfreeamerica.org/media-research/research

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