

RECALL HUNGER IN CALIFORNIA
2003 SPECIAL ELECTION CANDIDATE'S SURVEY

Even though we live in one of the wealthiest states in the country, too many Californians experience hunger or are at risk of hunger. According to the US Department of Agriculture, more than one in ten people in California are food insecure, meaning that these individuals do not have access to enough food at all times for a healthy life.

The California Hunger Action Coalition (CHAC) is sending this survey to all the gubernatorial candidates to learn where each candidate stands on the issue of hunger and fighting the persistence of hunger in California. Please take the time to fill out the survey and fax or e-mail it to the California Hunger Action Coalition at 510-834-3259 (f) or ahicks@secondharvest.org by Tuesday, September 23. Responses to the survey will not be shared with the media or be used to endorse a candidate. The coalition plans to use the information collected from the survey to support the development of a legislative agenda in 2004.

Candidate's Name: _____

THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM

The Food Stamp Program is a federally funded program that provides food assistance to families and individuals living below 130 percent of the federal poverty level. The program provides families, seniors and others, who often have to choose between putting food on the table and paying rent, with the ability to purchase nutritious foods.

Only 49 percent of eligible Californians currently receive food stamps. Because of existing barriers to enrolling in the food stamp program, the state turns away roughly 1 billion dollars in funding from the federal government that could be used to help working families put food on the table and support our farmers and our food industry.

We would like to know what you would do if you were governor to enroll more people in need into the Food Stamp Program.

Questions:

- 1. Would you support allowing food stamp participants to own a reliable car? (Current state policy does not allow individuals who own a car worth more than \$4650 to receive food stamps.)**
 - Yes, I support changing the current law and allowing people to own a reliable car and receive food stamps.
 - No, I oppose this proposal.
 - I don't know but I would like more information on the issue.

2. Would you support allowing people who have had a drug felony conviction to receive food stamps once they have enrolled in or completed a recovery program? (While many states, such as Michigan, Oklahoma and New Mexico, have chosen to allow people with former drug felony convictions to apply for food stamps, Californians who have a drug felony conviction are disqualified from receiving food stamps for life even when they are successful participants or graduates of a recovery program.)

- Yes, I support offering food stamps to eligible Californians who have a drug felony conviction but who are successful participants or graduates of a recovery program.
- No, I oppose this proposal.
- I don't know but I would like more information on the issue.

3. Would you support eliminating the fingerprint requirement for food stamp applicants which costs the state approximately \$11 million each year? (All food stamp applicants must provide a fingerprint when they apply for food stamps. This procedure has proven to be a costly and ineffective mechanism for preventing fraud in the food stamp program.)

- Yes, I support eliminating the fingerprinting requirement for food stamps.
- No, I oppose this proposal.
- I don't know but I would like more information on the issue.

SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN

Through the federally funded school lunch program, children from low-income families are able to receive free or reduced lunches at school. However, at least 60 percent of the children receiving school lunch do not receive school breakfast. This means that too many low-income children are starting the day on an empty stomach.

Questions:

4. Would you support requiring schools with a majority of low-income students to offer federally funded breakfasts to their students? (Schools can currently choose whether to serve breakfast to students.)

- Yes, I support requiring schools where 50 percent or more students are low-income to serve a federally funded breakfast to students.
- No, I oppose this proposal.
- I don't know but I would like more information on the issue.

We look forward to hearing from you. Please return this survey by Friday, September 19. If you have any questions about the survey or would like more information about hunger in California, please contact the CHAC Chair, Jessica Bartholow at jbartholow@secondharvest.org.

California Hunger Action Coalition (CHAC), www.hungeraction.net: A broad-based statewide membership organization of food program providers, consumers and anti-hunger advocates. United in their belief that access to adequate, nutritious and safe food is a fundamental human right, CHAC advocates for freedom from hunger for all Californians.