



Bill Summary

AB 1618 seeks to ensure California maintains accurate, statewide data on the prevalence and severity of food insecurity in California following the discontinuation of the USDA Household Food Security Survey.

Background

Since 1997, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has collected data through the Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement (CPS-FSS) to produce the annual Household Food Security Report survey. The Report provides statistics on household food insecurity for families across America, supplying consistent and measurable data to inform public policy.

The survey has long served many local nonprofits and food banks by measuring the number of households struggling to put food on the table. In 2023, the survey reported 47.3 million people, including 13.8 million children, faced food insecurity. The data has helped inform the role of many federal and state nutrition programs, such as:

- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);
- The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, Children (WIC);
- Summer EBT;
- School Meal Programs;
- Community Food Distributions

Problem

On September 20, 2025, the USDA announced the termination of future Household Food Security Reports because they claimed the reports were “redundant, costly and politicized.” Without future access to these reports, local food banks and programs are left with no thorough collection mapping food insecurity in California.

The survey provided a roadmap on where the need for critical resources is needed the most. Without proper assessment of food insecurity in communities, nonprofits and food banks are unable

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to mobilize and continue their purpose of feeding communities. With this discontinuation, it will leave millions of low- income families in the shadows

Solution

AB 1618 would establish a statewide food insecurity data collection program administered by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to replace the gap left by the discontinuation of the USDA Household Food Security Survey.

Specifically, the bill would require CDSS to develop a definition of food insecurity that will serve as a benchmark to administer a regular statewide survey that captures detailed information on food insecurity among California households. The data collected would be used by food banks, food distribution centers, social services, and inform state and local decision-making.

By maintaining a reliable California-specific source of food insecurity data that is responsive to the state’s diverse needs, we can better evaluate the effectiveness of nutrition assistance programs and guide investments in hunger prevention. It will ensure policymakers, food banks and community-based organizations operating on limited and unstable funding have the information needed to respond to food insecurity in real time to prioritize services and allocate resources efficiently.



Sponsors/ Support

- Redwood Empire Food Bank (Sponsor)
- American Association of Retired Persons- AARP (Sponsor)
- California Food Recovery Coalition
- California Association of Food Banks
- Californians Against Waste (CAW)
- California Food Recovery Coalition
- California WIC Association
- County Welfare Directors Association of California
- Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organization
- Hunger Action Los Angeles
- Meet Each Need with Dignity (MEND)
- Mom's Meals
- Parent Voices California
- Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County
- Sonoma County Action Network
- StopWaste
- Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)
- Urban Counties of California (UCC)
- United Way of Central Eastern California
- Valley Vision

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