



Get to Know the Candidates

Vote Against Hunger

November 30, 2022

Our mission is to connect people and communities in Massachusetts to reliable sources of food while advocating for policies that make food more accessible—so that no one goes hungry. As such, Project Bread asked all candidates who were not unopposed incumbents to answer a few questions about their views on anti-hunger initiatives.

Name: Meghan Kilcoyne

Party: Democratic

District: 12th Worcester

Position Sought: State Representative

Website: www.megkilcoyne.com

What is your experience with the federal nutrition assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), school, summer, and after school, meals, or the Women, Infant, and Child (WIC) program?

We have assisted our constituents in connecting them to our federal partners to ensure they receive these benefits. In my first term, the House took action to protect the school meal program in the State Budget which I was happy to support.

What are your plans for working in partnership with those with recent or current lived experience of food insecurity to inform and implement solutions?

I am currently a member of the Food Systems Caucus, which does an excellent job at ensuring legislators are connecting with both our food suppliers and producers and connecting with organizations that help distribute food equitably.

Locally, I have worked closely with out local food pantries to make sure they are able to keep up with demand. For example, WHEAT Community Connections in Clinton saw an exponential increase in families needing food assistance during





the pandemic. My office has worked with our local delegation to help them with equipment and resources so they can continue to serve our communities.

How would you further ensure that more eligible residents receive SNAP benefits both in district and across the Commonwealth?

I was happy to support the inclusion of the common application portal for benefits in the FY2023 budget. I hope in the next session we will continue to remove barriers to accessing SNAP and addressing issues such as stigma for families struggling with food insecurity as well as lack of awareness about the program.

Would you support using additional state resources to supplement SNAP to either expand eligibility, increase benefits amount, or both?

Yes.

How would you help promote Summer Eats (the Summer Food Service Program) program in your district and across the state?

I would work with organizations like project bread to raise awareness and promote the benefits of the program to my network. I also would work with my colleagues to explore other options, such as funding for an awareness campaign to promote the program.

Would you commit to supporting state legislation that ensures free school meals for all students?

Yes.





What steps would you take in reducing stigma and increasing accessibility for households of all backgrounds in access federal nutrition programs and other food resources?

We have worked locally to help expand food pantries provide them with resources to support increased demand. I have also worked with local leaders to support and uplift WHEAT and other nutritional programs locally.

How do you plan to use your platform to dismantle systemic racism and xenophobia, particularly in ways that advance equity in accessing basic needs, employment opportunities, and increase generational wealth?

Throughout my first term, I made a conscious effort to support legislation that aimed at addressing issues of inequity. I also tried to listen to those those most impacted by those issues to be better equipped to understand and work towards policy solutions that would improve the lives of those who are directly impacted by growing inequity both in our state and country.

For example, this session, I was pleased to support and vote for the Worker's Mobility Act. this legislation, currently law, enables many immigrant families and people of color who are living in our state to obtain a drivers license so they can better provide for themselves and families without fear of arrest or deportation. Unfortunately there is a ballot question seeking to repeal it and I hope to join efforts to encourage voters to protect this vital law.

Can you please share your plans to address other challenges food insecure household may be facing?

Two issues I hope to work on next session is addressing rising costs of childcare. As a member of the Women's Caucus, we raised the alarm of how dire the situation was, which has only worsened since the pandemic. Many families cannot afford to place their child in care without working multiple jobs. We need to take action to help working families across the Commonwealth.





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I have also advocated to protect and support community hospitals. because of rising costs and pressures to consolidated services, we are seeing a rise in healthcare desserts across the state. In my district, many of my constituents rely on access to small but vital hosptials that are in the community. It is essential that we make sure these smaller hospitals are able to continue to provide services.

How would you ensure new economic opportunities or programs to help your constituents access basic needs, such as housing or food, are equitably delivered to those most in need?

I think it is important to work with and learn from organizations who are on the ground on these issues. For instance, in my district there is an organization called World Farmers who provide plots of land to refugee and immigrant farmers to either farm for food for their families or even to expand and see food at local markets. Most of their farmers are also people of color. MY office has worked closely with them to provide funding and resources to support their mission, which both provides food an economic opportunity to people and families who need it most.

In addition to supporting organizations locally, I hope to continue working with my colleagues in the Legislature and the Food System Caucus to push for legislation that can address these issues on a larger scale.

What else would you like to share about your plans to address food insecurity and its root causes?

[No response provided by candidate]

