



Meeting Date: June 24, 2025  
Agenda Item No. 11  
Distribution Date: June 24, 2025  
Batch No. 01

Fighting hunger.  
Feeding hope.

June 23, 2025

Dear Vice Chair Lawson Remer and Honorable Supervisors,

On behalf of the Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank, I am writing in strong support of Agenda Item 11: Advancing Food Justice by Supporting the San Diego Food Bank and Suncoast Market Co-op. We are grateful to Supervisors Joel Anderson and Monica Montgomery Steppe for championing this important board action.

The Food Bank sees the need for food assistance growing every day. In April 2025, the number of individuals served via TEFAP increased by 10% compared to April 2024. However, despite this rising demand, the amount of TEFAP food received in 2025 is roughly half of what we received in 2024, and 21% less than in March of this year, primarily due to cancelled supplemental TEFAP loads. To the parents, families, and veterans we serve, this has meant fewer essential items—less protein, fewer grains, and limited access to nutrient-dense foods.

Historically, when government-administered food assistance programs are reduced or disrupted, the San Diego Food Bank has experienced a sharp and sustained increase in community reliance on our services. We are once again seeing that pattern repeat itself. Every reduction in public food programs shifts the burden to local food banks and community-based organizations.

The investment proposed in Agenda Item 11 demonstrates the County's leadership in being proactive and part of the solution with food assistance programs. This will ensure additional food variety and nutrition-dense foods throughout the County, especially in rural and high-need communities via our mobile pantries and neighborhood distributions.

We thank the Board of Supervisors for recognizing the urgency of this moment and respectfully urge your support of Agenda Item 11. With your partnership, we can continue to work toward a more just, resilient, and hunger-free San Diego County.

Sincerely,

Casey Castillo  
Chief Executive Officer  
Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank

June 23, 2025

Dear Vice Chair Lawson Remer and Honorable Supervisors,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank, I am writing in support of agenda item 11 ADVANCING FOOD JUSTICE BY SUPPORTING THE SAN DIEGO FOOD BANK AND SUNCOAST MARKET CO-OP. I would like to thank Supervisors Joel Anderson and Monica Montgomery Steppe for leading this board action.

As the state-designated, sole Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) administrator for the County of San Diego, the San Diego Food Bank received notice in March that supplemental food deliveries for this critical program were cancelled. This unanticipated loss in federal funding represented a 40% reduction in TEFAP funding and as a result, clients have seen a decrease in the number of items in TEFAP food distributed.

This unexpected decrease in government-administered food comes at a time when San Diego County is experiencing an increase in hunger. As of the end of 2024, 1 in 4 (25%) San Diegans experience nutrition insecurity, including 212,000 children, 176,000 older adults (age 60+), and 133,000 individuals living with disabilities.<sup>1</sup>

With today's investment, the County of San Diego will help the Food Bank fill gaps by supplementing its neighborhood distributions and mobile pantries with staple items such as proteins, grains, dairy, and ready-to-eat foods to help create a more balanced and nutritious menu that supports the holistic dietary needs of high-need and rural communities across the county of San Diego.

We are grateful to the Board of Supervisors for recognizing the urgency of this moment and taking meaningful action, through this board item, to address it. We respectfully urge your support for agenda item 11 and thank you for your continued leadership and support in our shared mission of creating a Hunger Free San Diego.

Sincerely,

Sandra L. Kerl

Board Chair Elect

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<sup>1</sup> *San Diego Hunger Coalition. December 2024 Nutrition Insecurity Dashboards. San Diego, CA; April 2025*  
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