

Resolution in Support of Food Waste Reduction and Alleviating Food Insecurity

WHEREAS U.S. food waste is estimated to be 30-40% of the food supply, and Californians throw away more than 11 billion pounds of food waste annually, worth billions of dollars.^{1,2} Wasted food causes 8-10% of greenhouse gas emissions and is the largest category of material placed in landfills.³ Resources, such as water and energy, are used in vain; and

WHEREAS 1 in 4 people in Santa Clara County are at risk of hunger (720,000 people) and food banks are still struggling to bridge this gap (namely, Second Harvest is providing food to over 257,000 people monthly but there remains a gap of about 450,000 individuals);⁴ and

WHEREAS food insecurity is associated with several chronic illnesses, impacting historically underserved populations, threatening to widen socioeconomic differences.⁵ Access to sufficient quantities of healthy food is tied directly to mental health and academic success;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Santa Clara County Democratic Party supports the adoption of strategies to combat food waste and food insecurity in our community, including the following:

- 1) Raise awareness, especially at schools, about the environmental and social impacts of food waste. Promote strategies that individuals can apply immediately such as meal planning, proper food storage, and composting.
 - a) Schools may implement compost bins and educate students and staff on their use
 - b) Schools facilitate food sharing opportunities
- 2) Support the continuation and expansion of programs that serve individuals experiencing food insecurity, prioritizing underserved areas and diverse communities, through measures such as diverting surplus food or fundraising efforts.
 - a) School-based food distribution programs
 - b) Second Harvest of Silicon Valley⁶
- 3) Advocate for policies and programs that promote food security.
 - a) Expanded nutrition assistance programs
 - b) Support Assembly Bill 311, which would make all California residents eligible for food assistance programs, regardless of age, immigration status, or other attributes
 - c) Support Senate Bill 1383, which is in the process of implementation, which requires that by 2025 California will recover 20% of edible food that would otherwise be sent to landfills, to feed people in need⁷

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to Members of Congress who represent any part of Santa Clara County to support legislation and funding initiatives that address food waste reduction and food security.

Submitted by Angela Mo