

Vote to End Hunger Candidate Survey

Aaron Peskin



Running For:
**San Francisco Supervisor,
District 3**

"To solve the issue of food insecurity we must take an integrated approach, connecting social services with housing and workforce development."



COVID-19 has caused a rapid and historic spike in food insecurity, especially among communities of color. If elected, what will you do to increase economic opportunity and food access for our hardest-hit communities?

Economic opportunity, food security, and housing are inextricable components in quality of life for people in our hardest-hit communities. It's hard to get a job if someone does not have an address and more challenging to make food without a kitchen and a place to live. I've always focused on addressing housing policies through the creation of affordable housing units and eviction prevention. To solve the issue of food insecurity we must take an integrated approach, connecting social services with housing and workforce development. I am proud to have supported and pushed through a navigation center and workforce training center at 888 Post, and will continue to fight day in and day out for our most vulnerable community members.

San Francisco ranks 46th of 58 counties in enrolling eligible people in the CalFresh program. If elected, what actions will you take to improve CalFresh program access and utilization?

While CalFresh funding and policies are controlled by our Federal and State legislators, as a city official, I have the responsibility to ensure Federal and State funding is allocated effectively and efficiently. We must reduce barriers by increasing language access, providing more education about the program, and eliminating the fear of public charge. We must also encourage departments to provide service and outreach directly in the communities of greatest need. Additionally, we must work with community based organizations and community leaders to integrate CalFresh outreach into every part of the social service referral process.

Food insecurity is a major contributor to poor health and higher healthcare costs. What steps or legislative actions would you take to ensure that food insecure people with diet-related diseases have access to nutritious food?

We must explore more options for how and where people (especially those with pre-existing conditions) can access fresh and nutritious food. An excellent example of this is the school-based meal pickup at our public schools in the wake of their closing due to COVID-19. It was amazing what can happen when the legislature and community are united with purpose. I am proud that my office was able to advocate for a distribution site in Chinatown at Gordon J. Lau Elementary when before there had not been a site in Chinatown, an area with tremendous need. In addition to access to affordable, nutritious food, we must also enable and empower people in their pursuit of healthy eating by ensuring they have proper cooking facilities and education.

In SF and Marin, 1 in 5 people experience food insecurity. What other steps or legislative actions would you take to address poverty and hunger in your community?

Food insecurity is often one of the many challenges that people living with poverty have to deal with on a daily basis. To address hunger issues, we must also address housing, employment, education, and mental and physical health. As a member of a local government, it is my duty to prioritize resources to those most in need. During this pandemic, we passed policies that protect tenants from evictions, provided testing to high-risk residents living in congregate settings,

supported small businesses and their workers, and rededicated public resources, including library programs and open spaces to serve low-income families, children and seniors. We must take an integrated approach to solving poverty and increase collaboration between city departments, public institutions and nonprofits; but most importantly, we must re-imagine how resources are allocated in our society and ensure we work with those that the programs aim to serve.