

Senate Memorial 93:
Consolidating Federal Anti-Hunger
Programs in New Mexico

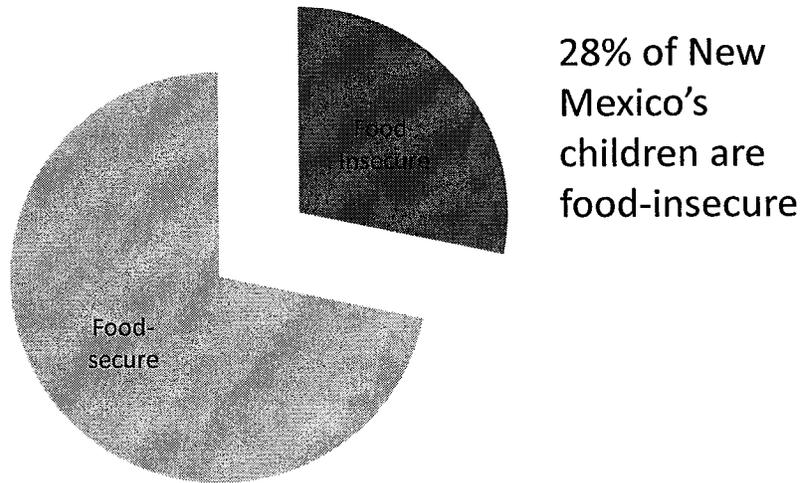
New Mexico Appleseed

July 16, 2015

Senate Memorial 93

- Directs LHHS to study feasibility of combining state-administered nutrition programs
- Our focus: meal programs for children
- Our recommendation: combine child nutrition programs in a single state agency whose core competency is social services

Child Hunger in New Mexico



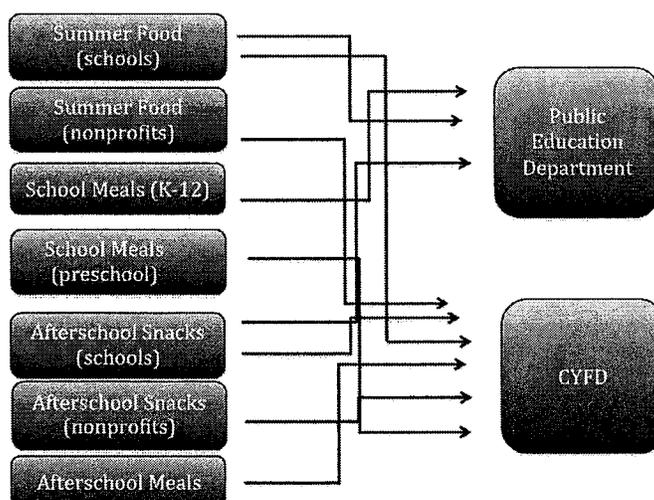
Impact of Child Nutrition Programs

- Increased food security
- Decreased obesity and improved health
- Over 200,000 children served in NM
- Over \$160 million annually in federal funds for the state

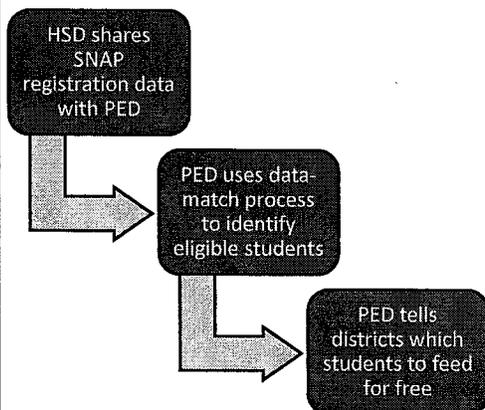
Current Meal Programs and State Agencies

This federal program:	Serves this function:	And is in this agency:
National School Lunch Program (NSLP)	School lunches, afterschool snacks, and some summer meals	Public Education Department
School Breakfast Program (SBP)	School breakfasts for children	Public Education Department
Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	Meals for day care centers and afterschool programs	Children, Youth & Families Department
Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)	Summer meals for children in low-income areas	Children, Youth & Families Department

Current Meal Programs and State Agencies

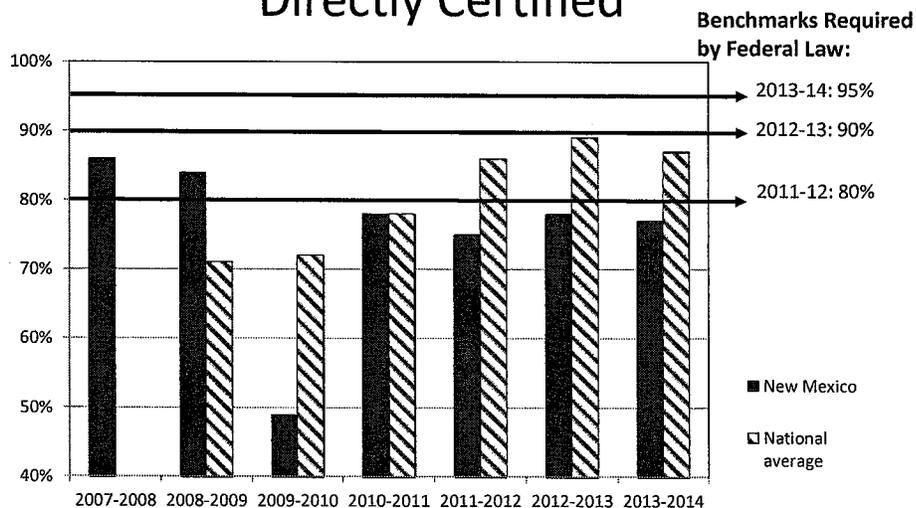


SNAP Direct Certification



- State automatically signs up students for free school meals
- Required by federal law
- New Mexico is on an improvement plan for not meeting required benchmarks

Percentage of Students on SNAP Directly Certified



Spring 2014: 100,000 kids at risk of losing meals

Community Eligibility:
a new program based
on direct certification



PED sent out incorrect
deadlines and eligibility
numbers to school
districts



Districts were confused
about how and whether
to sign up

Provision 2 provided
free meals for 100,000
students



Because of PED errors,
schools had to recertify or
drop the program



Many lacked resources to
recertify

Spring 2014, cont'd

- Crisis averted by collaboration: advocates, USDA, Congressional delegation
- USDA extended deadline for Provision 2 recertification
- USDA and PED conducted trainings around the state
- Result: 47% increase in students at universal feeding schools

Other Problems

- In 2014, no school meal reimbursements between August and November
- New Mexico Grown grants awarded too late to buy most produce
- High-poverty schools received incorrectly low reimbursements

Impact of Problems

- Children go hungry
- Districts and organizations struggle to make programs work financially
- New Mexico loses federal funding

Conclusion

- Anti-hunger programs are desperately needed and play a powerful role
- Program consolidation is a strong option to increase effectiveness in the long term

For follow-up questions, please contact:

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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE INTERIM LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF COMBINING THE
ADMINISTRATION OF UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAMS INTO ONE STATE DEPARTMENT AND
REQUESTING FEDERAL FACILITATION OF EFFORTS TO STREAMLINE
ADMINISTRATION OF THOSE PROGRAMS.

WHEREAS, New Mexico suffers from chronic hunger problems
and leads the nation with children living in food-insecure
households, according to feeding America, a nationwide
network of food banks; and

WHEREAS, state-administered United States department of
agriculture food distribution programs have been highly
effective tools for addressing hunger, but bureaucratic
complexity at times creates barriers to participation in
these important programs; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico currently administers its
United States department of agriculture food distribution
programs through several different state agencies, including
the public education department, the children, youth and
families department and the human services department; and

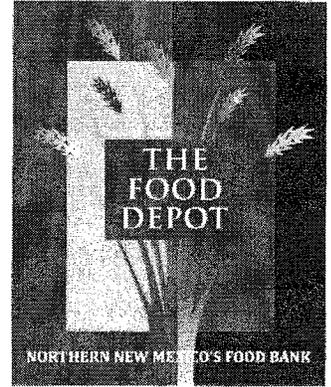
WHEREAS, reducing bureaucratic complexity could simplify
application processes, facilitate appropriate data sharing
among programs, reduce administrative costs and increase

1 governmental efficiency;

2 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
3 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the interim legislative health
4 and human services committee be requested to study the
5 feasibility of combining the administration of all
6 state-administered food distribution programs, including the
7 supplemental nutrition assistance program, the national
8 school lunch program, the child and adult care food program,
9 the school breakfast program, the summer food service
10 program, the special supplemental nutrition program for
11 women, infants and children, the emergency food assistance
12 program and others, into a single existing state department;
13 and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the
15 New Mexico congressional delegation be requested to work with
16 the United States department of agriculture to facilitate any
17 efforts to streamline the administration of its food
18 distribution programs within state agencies; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
20 transmitted to the co-chairs of the New Mexico legislative
21 council, the chair of the legislative health and human
22 services committee, the secretary of public education, the
23 secretary of children, youth and families and the secretary of
24 human services. _____



July 13, 2015

Members of the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee
New Mexico Legislature

Honorable Members of the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee:

First, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the valuable partnership we have with the State of New Mexico, and for the strong support the Legislature provides to New Mexico's five food banks.

The Food Depot, Northern New Mexico's food bank distributes food through 145 partner agencies in nine counties in Northern New Mexico. On average, the food bank provides enough food for more than 350,000 meals each month. In the last 12 months, The Food Depot distributed nearly five million pounds of food to hungry families and seniors.

The food bank currently works with the Food and Nutrition Services Bureau in the New Mexico Human Services Department to distribute USDA commodities through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). Because of this partnership, the food bank can provide an additional 550,000 meals to hungry New Mexicans in our nine county service area each year. We have benefitted from our work with the State on this program for more than 10 years.

This summer, The Food Depot launched the Lunch Box Express, a meal delivery program that reaches children who are not already accessing meals through the Summer Food Service Program. We teamed up with the Santa Fe Public Schools and Santa Fe County to launch the program at four sites on Santa Fe's south side – an area of high poverty and hunger. I contacted New Mexico Children Youth and Families Department to inquire about partnering with them to conduct the meal sites for the Summer Food Service Program. Staff immediately responded with a lot of enthusiasm and encouragement. They guided us through the process of becoming a sponsor of the Summer Food Service Program.

To sign up for these programs, I spent many hours completing paperwork and attending trainings. In fact, to obtain the TEFAP contract for our service area, I prepared a multi-copy proposal that took more than 40 hours to complete – more than 200 hours spent by the five food banks to submit the proposal. In addition, we spend 30-40 hours preparing for and going through annual inspections for each program. We complete numerous weekly and monthly reports for each program as well.

I believe the partnership we have with the State of New Mexico is a valuable one...one that greatly benefits hungry New Mexicans. However, the paperwork, training, and inspections consume so much

VISION: Healthy, hunger-free communities in Northern New Mexico

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of our staff resources. We hesitate to sign up for additional programs. Imagine the additional meals that could be provided if the government food programs worked together under one department. This change would allow reporting, training, inspecting to be consolidated, thus placing less of a burden on the nonprofit organizations eager to partner with the State to feed hungry people.

Thank you for your time today. I very much appreciate your willingness to hear our suggestions for increasing efficiencies. These improved efficiencies mean more meals to our hungry neighbors in need.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sherry F. Hooper". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Sherry F. Hooper
Executive Director