

MAKE HUNGER HISTORY.

The Make Hunger History Coalition represents over 200 organizations and over 750 individual members. Together, we imagine a Massachusetts where no family goes hungry, where every child has access to nourishing food, and where hunger is a thing of the past. This vision is within our reach, and Massachusetts is poised to lead the nation in ending food insecurity once and for all.

We believe our State Legislature plays a key role. As such, we solicited all who were not unopposed to answer the following questions.

Name:	Nomita Ganguly
Party:	Democratic
District:	24th Middlesex
Position Sought:	State Representative
Website:	www.nomitaganguly4rep.com

What is your connection to or experience with hunger, food security, federal nutrition programs, or the food system, if any?

Candidate Answer: My connection to this issue comes through both community involvement and professional advocacy. I've volunteered at local food banks myself, and with my kids and their scout groups, which gave me a firsthand look at how many families in our own community rely on that support. Professionally, as a legislative advocate for older adult nonprofits, I've supported advocates working on food insecurity as it affects seniors specifically, whether that's isolation, fixed incomes, or difficulty getting to a pantry or grocery store at all. I helped secure increased funding for councils on aging so they could provide nutrition assistance directly to the older adults who need it most. Food insecurity is an issue I've seen up close in my own community and beyond, and I'll make addressing it a priority in the Legislature.

What do you believe is the role of the state government in ensuring everyone in our state has enough to eat and reducing the demand for emergency food resources?

Candidate Answer: The state has a responsibility to ensure that no one in Massachusetts goes hungry. Food pantries and food banks play an essential role

in meeting immediate needs, but they should not be the primary solution to hunger. Our job is to strengthen the systems that prevent families from reaching that point by expanding access to nutrition programs, removing unnecessary barriers to enrollment, and making sure benefits reach eligible residents quickly. At the same time, we must continue investing in school meals, local food programs, community organizations, and local food systems while addressing the broader challenges of housing costs, health care, and economic security that drive food insecurity in the first place.

What should the Commonwealth do to ensure robust access to effective anti-hunger programs such as SNAP?

Candidate Answer: Massachusetts should make it as easy as possible for eligible residents to access SNAP and other nutrition programs. That means simplifying the application and renewal process, investing in technology that works for applicants, providing multilingual outreach, partnering with trusted community organizations, and ensuring the Department of Transitional Assistance has the staff needed to process applications and answer questions promptly. Federal nutrition programs are only effective if people can actually access them, and we have a responsibility to make that happen.

As a member of the Massachusetts legislature, would you advocate for state funds to hire the staff necessary to ensure every eligible low-income resident successfully accesses federally-funded nutrition benefits?

Candidate Answer: Yes. When federally funded benefits go unclaimed because applications are delayed or people cannot reach a caseworker, Massachusetts is leaving resources on the table that could help our residents. Investing in adequate staffing at the Department of Transitional Assistance is a practical and fiscally responsible way to ensure eligible families, older adults, and individuals with disabilities receive the support they qualify for. Good government means making programs work as they were intended.

While hunger is a statewide issue that impacts a variety of demographics, certain populations experience it at disproportionately higher rates. For example, Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, immigrants, members of LGBTQ+ community, and people with disabilities experience hunger at disproportionately higher rates.

What do you believe are the primary factors driving these disparities, and what can government do to reduce them?

Candidate Answer: *The primary factors are economic and systemic inequalities. The affordability crisis, characterized by rising housing, child care, health care and grocery costs, combined with federal disruptions to SNAP, hits families with the least financial cushion hardest, and those are disproportionately households comprised of people of color, immigrants, LGBTQ+ community, and people with disabilities due to systemic barriers. But there's a second, often overlooked driver, which is barriers within the food assistance system itself. Research shows Black and Latino residents face more transportation barriers, fewer bilingual staff, and less awareness of pantry hours than other residents with equal need. There is also real, measurable inequities by age, income, gender identity, and race within the system that is meant to help.*

Government should address the systemic root causes by addressing affordability across all sectors and partnering with trusted community organizations that can help connect residents with available resources. It needs to provide full funding for nutrition assistance programs and staffing for the Department of Transitional Assistance so that it can adequately help families rather than creating another barrier. On the access side, it needs to partner with community organizations to provide multilingual staff and materials, transportation support, and real accountability for inequities within the system itself.

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

Candidate Answer: *Food insecurity is not simply about food; it is about affordability, dignity, and opportunity. Throughout my career advocating for*

older adults and nonprofit organizations, I have seen how interconnected these issues are. As a legislator, I will work to strengthen our safety net while also addressing the underlying challenges that make it difficult for people to make ends meet, including housing, health care, and economic security. Every resident deserves the peace of mind that comes from knowing they can provide healthy meals for themselves and their families, and I will work to ensure Massachusetts continues to lead in making that goal a reality.