

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:	Tom Hendrickson
Party:	Democratic
District:	3rd Hampden
Position Sought:	State Representative
Website:	TomHendrickson.org

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

Candidate Answer: *When I was in high school, I volunteered with the "Take and Eat" program at my church, which involved preparing, packaging, and delivering meals to homebound seniors in Agawam.*

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: *I strongly believe that access to affordable, nutritious food is a human right, and that the state government has a responsibility to ensure that people's needs are met.*

My district contains many rural, sparsely populated communities that lack convenient access to grocery stores. As state representative, I will work to ensure that people in these remote areas can conveniently access nutritious food at an affordable price.

We also have many locally-owned farms throughout my district. As state representative, I will support the Fostering Agricultural Resilience in Massachusetts (FARM) Act, which will provide support to local farmers in my

district in a variety of ways, including codifying the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP).

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

Candidate Answer: SNAP is an immensely important program, and we need to ensure that those who need it are able to access it. I support, among other things, codifying the Healthy Incentives Program permanently, to incentivize SNAP recipients to purchase healthy, locally-grown produce, and to support our local farmers.

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, the proper administration of these nutrition benefits requires adequate staffing levels; I will support making sure that enough staff are hired to ensure that residents can access the benefits that they're eligible for.

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: I strongly believe in racial and LGBT equality, and will work to eliminate disparities in food access in Massachusetts. Additionally, people in rural communities are also disproportionately likely to experience food insecurity and lack of food access, due to low population density, infrastructure issues, and rural poverty driven by broad economic issues facing these communities. The municipal governments in these areas typically do not have the resources or budgets to properly address these issues, therefore the state government needs

to play a stronger role in providing food access and support for rural communities.

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

Candidate Answer: I strongly believe that access to affordable, nutritious food is a human right, and as state representative, I will work with experts in the field, community leaders, and other advocates to identify and fight for solutions to eliminate food insecurity in Massachusetts.