

January 9, 2015



Mayor Bowser,

On behalf of the Senior Advisory Coalition (SAC), D.C. Hunger Solutions wishes you a warm beginning of the New Year and a wonderful start in your role as the Mayor of our District of Columbia.

We know that your administration will prioritize the needs of our city's most vulnerable and treasured residents, our aging seniors. We cannot accept the fact that 16 percent of D.C. seniors live in poverty and over 15 percent face the threat of hunger. Moving forward in the next few months, D.C. Hunger Solutions and SAC are excited to work side by side with you and your staff to collaborate on new efforts to end senior hunger in the District.

There is a serious crisis among our most vulnerable seniors that demands immediate attention. As of December 2014, 155 seniors were on the waitlist to participate in Home Delivered Meals, a program that delivers nutritious meals to seniors who are unable to shop or prepare food on their own. Effective January 6th, DCOA sent an email to all the lead senior agencies informing them "to halt all new enrollments of frail home delivered meals, in addition to all enrollments of Mom's Meals." This action ensures that the waitlist will only grow and when new slots open up, lead agencies will be barred from adding any clients to the home-delivered meal program.

In order to cover the price of the meals for all those currently on the waitlist, the program will need an additional \$1.7 million in funding in this fiscal year. And there will be more funding necessary to cover the staff costs of assessing eligibility for Home Delivered Meals and monitoring program participation and ensure that a new waitlist does not form given the high rates of food hardship among seniors.

It is in the city's best interest to invest in the safety and care of seniors and ensure that seniors can access vital nutrition support. Research has shown that states that invest more in Home Delivered Meals have fewer adults living in nursing homes. Additional funding for the program will go to supporting the independence and healthy of aging adults throughout D.C.

Thank you for your time and attention. We here at D.C. Hunger Solutions look forward to discussing with you how to fully fund the Home Delivered Meals program so low income seniors can get the nutrition they need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alexandra Ashbrook", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Alexandra Ashbrook

Director, D.C. Hunger Solutions

1200 18th Street, NW, Suite 400

Washington, DC 20016

aashbrook@dchunger.org – 202.986.2200 x3019

CC: DC Councilmembers
Senior Advisory Coalition