



**Testimony in Support of Funding for Maryland Meals for Achievement (MMFA)
Maryland State Department of Education Budget
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Education
February 27, 2014**

Maryland Hunger Solutions strongly supports the Governor's proposed \$1.7 million increase in funding for the Maryland Meals for Achievement program because it reduces the number of children in Maryland who go hungry and increases the number of children who start the school day well-nourished and ready to learn.

The Maryland Meals for Achievement program (MMFA) increases access to the federal School Breakfast Program. Schools with >40% of students eligible for free or reduced price meals can provide universal, in-classroom breakfast at no cost to families. Now a national model, MMFA enhances educational performance, improves health, and reduces behavioral issues during the school day.

The School Breakfast Program is critically important to eradicating hunger and to achieving the State's goal of ending childhood hunger by 2015. The additional \$1.7 million in funding for MMFA will provide access to a nutritious breakfast to an added 40,000 Maryland schoolchildren.

MMFA is also a sound financial investment. For every state dollar spent on MMFA, \$4.75 is received in federal reimbursement from the School Breakfast Program.

On behalf of the tens of thousands of Maryland students who are participating in school breakfast programs – and especially on behalf of the children who will benefit because of the additional funding – we thank the Maryland Legislature for your support of this important program and for your leadership on behalf of the children of our state.

Please contact me at 410-528-0021 x27 if you have any additional questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Wilson, Director of Maryland Hunger Solutions

Maryland Hunger Solutions is a state-wide organization working to end hunger, promote nutrition, and improve well-being for Marylanders in need through education, advocacy, outreach and collaboration. Maryland Hunger Solutions focuses on improving and increasing participation in federal nutrition programs to ensure that everyone has access to adequate healthy food every day.