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December XX, 2023

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

We, the undersigned organizations based in New York, write to you in support of continued investment in our state's hunger relief programs – the Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP) and Nourish New York (NNY). Both programs play critical roles in enabling food relief organizations to support New Yorkers experiencing hunger. We applaud recent investments in both programs, which have enabled our organizations and partners to better support our communities in need.

With food insecurity on the rise, we urge you to fund NNY at \$75 million and HPNAP at \$64 million in your Executive Budget proposal.

Earlier this fall, the USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) reported that 2022 saw the fastest one-year rise in food insecurity rates since 2008, the first full year of the Great Recession. This aligns with what our food banks, pantries, and community-based partners are observing across the state. Food banks, for example, reported serving 62% more households and individuals in 2022 compared with 2019. It is also worth noting that the recent USDA data did not account for the end of SNAP Emergency Allotments (EAs).

Last year, HPNAP and NNY alone enabled New York food banks to distribute more than 50 million pounds of food. This support came at a critical time, with demand at emergency food distributions significantly higher than pre-pandemic levels. By investing modestly in both programs, New York can equip emergency food providers to support more hungry New Yorkers.

Throughout our nation's history, New York has led the way on countless issues. On food policy, for example, NNY and HPNAP are nationally recognized, highly effective programs. They

provide critical relief to the most vulnerable New Yorkers while efficiently supporting New York-based farms and food businesses – sound public policy that achieves results. That is why our organizations ask you to lead the way by including \$75 million for NNY and \$64 million for HPNAP in your Executive Budget proposal.

Sincerely,

Dan Egan
Executive Director
Feeding New York State