STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives

Newsletter From Rep. Diana Gonzales Worthen

District 9

June 13, 2025

Fighting Food Insecurity

This week, several members of the Arkansas House of Representatives traded their suits for aprons and served meals—not in the Capitol, but at the annual Serving Up Solutions fundraiser. This event supports the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, and proceeds go directly toward grants for food banks and soup kitchens across the state. It's just one way lawmakers are stepping up to fight hunger—both through volunteerism and through policy. In the most recent legislative session, the General Assembly passed several key measures aimed at reducing food insecurity in Arkansas.

Act 1008, the Grocery Tax Relief Act, will exempt groceries from state sales and use tax starting in 2026—making healthy food more affordable for families across the state. Act 123 guarantees free breakfast every school day for all students in Arkansas public schools. The law directs funds from medical marijuana taxes to support this effort. To further expand access to nutritious meals, Act 870 created the Healthy Food Retailer Program. This program, managed by the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, offers funding to grocery stores and retailers who commit to bringing fresh, healthy food to underserved communities.

Food donations also received a boost. Act 942, the Food Donation Liability and Immunity Act, offers protection from civil or criminal liability to those who donate or distribute food in good faith—encouraging more businesses and individuals to give. Additional legislation included Act 714, which extends sales tax exemptions to school cafeterias managed by third-party vendors. And with Act 529, Arkansans now have the explicit right to grow vegetable gardens on their private property—another step toward local, sustainable food sources.

Together, these actions represent a comprehensive, bipartisan effort to ensure no Arkansan goes hungry. From tax relief to school meals, garden rights to food donation laws, the 95th are working to make food more accessible and affordable across our state.