



Media Release

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“We Can’t Do it Alone”: Food Bank Calls on Retailers to Help Eliminate Food Deserts

Capital Area Food Bank Leads Charge to Bring Corporate Retailers into Underserved Communities

WASHINGTON, DC, June 29 – Washington, DC -- Following the rash of reporting on the dearth of grocery stores in low income areas, the Capital Area Food Bank, a \$70 million NGO, calls on all food retailers to join it in piloting new models of grocery service.

“Neither the Capital Area Food Bank nor our esteemed area retailer partners can afford to let the complete lack of grocery access continue for so many , given all we know about the power of food to support health and prevent diabetes and heart disease“, said Nancy E. Roman, CAFB President and CEO.

Gaps in retail access are pronounced in the Washington metro region. In the District’s Wards 7 and 8, just three full-service grocery stores east of the Anacostia River serve 149,750 residents, according to a recently published study by DC Hunger Solutions. The 82,000 residents of Ward 6, meanwhile, are served by ten full-service grocery stores.

“We can’t do it alone, but we sure can help absorb some of the risk for food retailers who want to solve the problem of inequitable food access by stepping up and moving into new markets,” said Roman, adding that pilots could include grocery delivery, mobile trucks selling subsidized groceries, or other innovative retail models.

“We’re doing a lot of work to help children and families form healthy food habits by supplying free produce, but if actually purchasing groceries takes 2 or 3 bus trips, we can’t expect those habits to continue”.

The food bank has made a mark in creating change through partnerships, including a wide-reaching partnership with local grocer Giant, with which it has, among other things, put affordable recipes into all 92 local Giant stores through its Retailer for Wellness program.

The Capital Area Food Bank supplies a broad network of 444 nonprofit partners, including food pantries, soup kitchens and other programs, with food and nutrition materials.

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About the Capital Area Food Bank: *The Capital Area Food Bank is the largest organization in the Washington metro area working to solve hunger and its companion problems: chronic undernutrition, heart disease and obesity. By partnering with nearly 450 community organizations in DC, Maryland and Virginia, as well as delivering food directly into hard to reach areas, the CAFB is helping 540,000 people each year get access to good, healthy food. That’s 12 percent of our region’s mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, sisters, brothers, and grandparents. To learn more, visit: capitalareafoodbank.org, or find the Capital Area Food Bank on Facebook at facebook.com/CapitalAreaFoodBank, and Twitter at [@foodbankmetrodc](https://twitter.com/foodbankmetrodc).*