

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 13

BY SENATOR WILLARD-LEWIS

A RESOLUTION

To express support of the Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans and Acadiana in its efforts to fight hunger and promote support for the value and need of nutritional feeding programs.

WHEREAS, Second Harvest of Greater New Orleans was founded on December 9, 1982, and the food bank was distributing 100,000 pounds of food per month and then on September 3, 1985, the food bank became a fully accredited member of The Nation's Food Bank Network, allowing it to receive large donations from all over the country; and

WHEREAS, in 2004, the organization became known as Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans and Acadiana; by September 2005, Second Harvest became the largest food bank in the world's history, with the help of America's Feeding America, and skilled food bank volunteers from all over the country; and in order to accommodate its growth, Second Harvest acquired and moved into a 200,000 square foot warehouse in Jefferson Parish in April 2010; and

WHEREAS, hunger exists for 644,540 people, 14.6 % of the population in Louisiana, who are food insecure; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana tops the nation with one out of four children ages 0-5 who are food insecure, which means they do not always know where they will find their next meal; and

WHEREAS, one out of five children under the age of 18 is at risk for hunger in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, hunger is an everyday disaster that is being battled right now by school children who are trying to learn, but distracted because they are hungry; and

WHEREAS, more than 1,000 school children participate in Second Harvest Food Bank's Lagniappe Backpack program, which is an initiative designed to meet the needs of children at risk for hunger during weekends and school vacations by providing backpacks filled with nutritious, child-friendly foods for students in Louisiana schools; and

WHEREAS, more than 1,000 students and caregivers are involved in the 9-A-Day effort, which delivers fresh fruits and vegetables the average person should consume daily to participating Head Start schools to encourage healthy eating habits among school-aged children and their families; and

WHEREAS, 15% of Louisiana seniors, 65 years and older, are living below the federal poverty line and Second Harvest Food Bank's Senior Brown Bag program provides nutritional support to seniors at risk of hunger, supplementing existing senior meal services with easy-to-prepare, nutritionally appropriate foods distributed each Friday to low income seniors; and

WHEREAS, each day Louisiana parents, caregivers, and seniors are making difficult choices between paying for utilities, rent, or healthcare or purchasing groceries; and

WHEREAS, funding and support for nutrition assistance is vital to maintaining the health and quality of life for one in eight Louisiana residents who struggle with hunger; and

WHEREAS, Second Harvest Food Bank serves approximately 263,000 different individuals annually across 23 south Louisiana parishes including nearly 82,000 children and 40,000 seniors in need; and

WHEREAS, during times of hardship and disaster, response, and recovery, approximately 2.5 million people across Louisiana parishes rely on Second Harvest Food Bank for emergency food; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that 90,000 households may eventually require food assistance as a result of the recent oil spill, and Second Harvest Food Bank is responding to the increased need for emergency food assistance along the Louisiana Gulf Coast; and

WHEREAS, fasting coupled with individual acts of sacrifice within a community of shared responsibility is urged to build momentum and ensure that no person goes hungry; and

WHEREAS, as many as able are urged to join in the fast in support and unity of those who Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans and Acadiana, in its efforts to raise awareness; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana is invited to join in the endeavors to raise awareness about the plight of hunger in Louisiana, the value of nutritional feeding programs; and

WHEREAS, Congress is memorialized to continue support of such necessary programs.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana hereby expresses support of the Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans and Acadiana in its efforts to fight hunger and promote support for the value and need of nutritional feeding programs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all Louisianians, if able, are hereby urged to participate in a day-long fast, Wednesday, April 6, 2011, demonstrating unity and empathy with the poor and hungry.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that volunteerism with such programs designed to help eliminate hunger in America is hereby encouraged.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE