
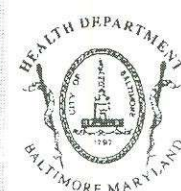


FROM	Name & Title	Oxiris Barbot, MD Commissioner 	Health Department	
	Agency Name & Address	Health Department 1001 E. Fayette Street Baltimore, Maryland 21201	MEMO	
	Subject	Council Bill 12-0071R		

To: President and Members
of the City Council
c/o 409 City Hall

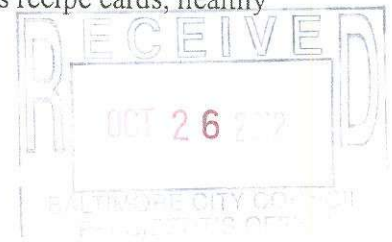
October 24, 2012

The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) is pleased to have the opportunity to review Council Bill 12-0071R – National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week – November 10th to 18th. The purpose of this resolution is to proclaim November 10-18, 2012 as National Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week and encourage all citizens to recognize that many people do not have housing and need support from citizens, and private or public nonprofit service entities.

BCHD's partner, Health Care for the Homeless (HCH), has been working to ensure everyone in Baltimore has access to healthcare. HCH works to prevent and end homelessness for vulnerable individuals and families by providing quality, integrated health care and promoting access to affordable housing and sustainable incomes through direct service, advocacy, and community engagement. HCH delivers pediatric, adult, and geriatric medical care, mental health services, social work and case management, addiction treatment, dental care, vision assistance, HIV services, outreach, services, supportive housing, and access to education and employment for thousands of City residents.

In addition, BCHD, Virtual Supermarket Program "Baltimarket" is working to increase access to healthy food. The Virtual Supermarket Program (VSP) is an innovative approach to food desert elimination that uses an online grocery ordering and delivery system to bring food to neighborhoods with low-vehicle ownership and inadequate access to healthy foods. It enables residents to place grocery orders at their local library, senior/disabled housing, public housing, or from any computer and pick up their order at their community site for no delivery cost. At the senior buildings and public housing sites the program is run by Neighborhood Food Advocates (fellow residents) who help their neighbors who are not comfortable using the Internet place their online orders. Residents pay for their groceries using cash, credit, debit and EBT/SNAP (food stamps). The VSP increases access to high quality affordable groceries neighborhoods, saving money and time. The VSP is the only program, nationally, that uses online food ordering and accepts SNAP.

The VSP promotes healthy eating alongside increasing access, because nutrition education is essential for long-term behavior and health changes. Diet is a key factor in obesity-related health problems such as heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. The VSP provides recipe cards, healthy



cooking demonstrations, and a \$10 incentive for healthy food purchases. Providing nutrition education alongside increasing access to healthy and affordable foods allows for nutrition behavior changes. At each of the housing development sites, VSP staff work with outside agencies to bring in comprehensive nutrition education. To help customers get their groceries home we plan to provide grocery push carts at a reduced cost. We will also purchase insulated grocery bags for our participants.

BCHD supports this resolution for National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week and appreciates the opportunity to discuss this important matter.

cc: Angela Gibson, Office of the Mayor
Michelle Spencer, Chief of Staff, Department of Health
Amy Samman, Legislative Director, Department of Health