

Date of Hearing: August 5, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 1025 (Hurtado) – As Amended June 8, 2026

Policy Committee:	Human Services	Vote:	6 - 1
	Economic Development, Growth, and		8 - 0
	Household Impact		

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill establishes the Office of Food Security and Affordability (Office) as an independent state entity to strengthen California's efforts to combat food insecurity.

Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Establishes, until January 1, 2037, the Office as an independent public entity not affiliated with another state agency or department.
- 2) Establishes the director of the Office and requires the director to be qualified by training and experience to perform the duties of the Office.
- 3) Specifies the duties of the director, including, among others, to solicit and accept grants or funds from federal, state, local, or private sources, and serve as a liaison between the Office and relevant state agencies, including but not limited to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), the California Department of Education (CDE), and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA).
- 4) Requires the Office to collaborate with appropriate state agencies or departments to:
 - a) Coordinate statewide outreach for food insecurity programs including developing new initiatives.
 - b) Support application processes for food security grants for in-state providers and state agencies or departments, as specified.
 - c) Coordinate communication among food banks and emergency food providers.
 - d) Establish best practices for food banks and emergency food providers to reduce food waste and increase the distribution of fresh produce and protein-rich foods.
 - e) Cooperate with research organizations and institutions of higher education to maintain ongoing gap analyses of areas underserved by food assistance programs.
 - f) Work with state and community partners to develop and update a strategic plan based on gap analyses.

- g) Assist with the development and implementation of public- private partnerships.
 - h) Coordinate outreach about assistance to address food insecurity during federally or state-declared emergencies.
 - i) Assist institutions of higher education, upon request, with the development and implementation of food insecurity programming and initiatives.
 - j) Develop new initiatives, establish outreach campaigns, and identify best practices to reach seniors, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable populations.
 - k) Coordinate outreach efforts to individuals who are newly unemployed and may be eligible for food assistance programs.
- 5) Creates the Food Security and Affordability Fund in the State Treasury for the receipt and deposit of moneys from federal, state, local, or private sources.

FISCAL EFFECT:

CDSS estimates General Fund costs of \$864,000 in the first year and \$844,000 annually until January 1, 2037, for four full-time positions to establish the new Office and implement the requirements of the bill.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

Despite significant state investments in programs like CalFresh, WIC, CalWORKs, school nutrition, and emergency food assistance, fragmented administration across multiple agencies has led to uneven outreach, enrollment barriers, and inconsistent coordination. Far too many eligible seniors, students, people with disabilities, and working families continue to fall through the cracks. [This bill] ensures California takes a comprehensive, equity-centered approach to reducing hunger, strengthening emergency response, and promoting long-term food security.

- 2) **Background.** California operates various food assistance programs through multiple state departments, primarily CDSS and CDE, but also through CDPH, CDFA, and the California Department of Aging. Programs include, among many others, CalFresh, the California Food Assistance Program, the Emergency Food Assistance Program, the National School Lunch Program, the Summer Food Service Program, SUN Bucks, the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program, and older adult nutrition programs.

The author and advocates assert this fragmentation creates challenges for effective coordination and oversight. The Little Hoover Commission in its 2024 report on food insecurity recommended the state establish a Food Security Council to coordinate and oversee the state's efforts in this area.

This bill requires the director of the Office created by this bill to serve as liaison to all food-involved state agencies to better coordinate food assistance outreach and delivery and to promote long-term food security in the state.

- 3) **Prior Legislation.** AB 1967 (Jackson), of the 2023-24 Legislative Session, would have created the position of Food Insecurity Officer within CDSS to coordinate efforts among relevant state agencies to address food insecurity. AB 1967 was held on the Senate Appropriations Committee's suspense file.

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