

**Testimony for Rep. Gene Green**  
**Member Day Request Before the Agriculture-Rural Development-FDA Subcommittee**  
**March 9, 2017**

Chairman Aderholt, Ranking Member Bishop, and Members of the Agriculture-Rural Development-Food and Drug Administration Subcommittee, I thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning.

My name is Gene Green. I have the great honor of representing the 29<sup>th</sup> District of Texas, covering the eastern half of the City of Houston and Harris County.

As the subcommittee begins to develop the Fiscal Year 2018 Appropriations bill, I urge the subcommittee to increase funding for The Emergency Food Assistance Program, popularly known as TEFAP.

The Texas 29<sup>th</sup> is home to nearly 110,000 food insecure residents, one out of every seven individuals living in my district today.

Hunger, unfortunately, is a problem in every community in America. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's latest Household Food Security Report, over 42 million Americans lived in food insecure households in 2015, including over 13 million children.

Research conducted by the National Foundation to End Senior Hunger found there were nearly 6 million food insecure seniors in our country in 2014.

Food insecure households do not always know where their next meal is coming and are often forced to make tough decisions over whether to choose between food and medicine, or food and heating.

The Houston Food Bank and other food banks around the country cannot meet the needs of these families without the support of TEFAP. My home state of Texas received \$29.6 million in TEFAP funds in FY2016 and \$25.8 million in TEFAP bonus dollars in 2015.

These funds were vital to supporting food banks and other charities in Texas and around the country meet their mission to help feed the most vulnerable in our society. In FY16 alone, the Houston Food Bank distributed 16.8 million pounds of emergency food and nutrition assistance provide by TEFAP throughout an 18 county service area covering much of Southeast Texas.

TEFAP is a highly efficient program that simultaneously supports our agriculture economy and is a vital resource for our nation's food banks and charities.

With strong TEFAP support, we are supporting our emergency food providers on the ground and protecting our most vulnerable constituents. Without adequate funding for TEFAP, food banks and charities will be hard-pressed to continue providing current levels of food assistance to the 42 million Americans suffering food insecurity.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify this afternoon. Please contact me if I can be of assistance on this or other important matters before the subcommittee.