



City of Northampton

MASSACHUSETTS

In the City Council, February 6, 2025

Upon the Recommendation of Councilor Deborah Klemer, Councilor Marianne LaBarge, and Councilor Rachel Maiore

R-25.214

A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR FULL SUPPORT OF THE HEALTHY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (HIP)

WHEREAS, In Massachusetts, the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) automatically applies to anyone who receives SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits and allows them to receive limited reimbursement when they purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables; and

WHEREAS, on December 1, 2024, the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) cut HIP monthly benefits by at least 50% to \$20 per household per month, regardless of household size from a variable \$40 to \$80 based on household size; and

WHEREAS, HIP serves as a critical tool for nutritional well-being and in the fight against food insecurity and hunger, which is pronounced among low-income residents of Northampton and the Commonwealth, including children, families, seniors, and people with disabilities and chronic illness; and

WHEREAS, in 2024, nearly 200,000 households in the Commonwealth and 10% of households in Hampshire County benefitted from HIP through an increase in their access to healthy local farm foods, and nearly 300 Massachusetts farmers increased their income through HIP sales; and

WHEREAS, HIP serves to decrease the estimated \$2.4 billion in avoidable costs related to food insecurity and hunger in Massachusetts by increasing access to healthy foods; and

WHEREAS, as a result of this cut to HIP funding, families across Massachusetts are reporting increased food insecurity; and

WHEREAS, vendors at Northampton’s Farmers Markets and farmstands rely on the sales that they receive with the support of programs like SNAP and HIP to sustain themselves, and since the cut to HIP began, farmers from across Massachusetts have reported a 60% drop in HIP sales compelling them to lay off staff and change their business plans to adjust for lowered sales; and

WHEREAS, HIP participation is up 19 percent as compared to last year and the need for state and local governments to support their residents’ nutritional security is likely to increase if federal support dries up; and

WHEREAS, the Northampton City Council recognizes its duty to advocate on behalf of our constituents grappling with food and nutritional insecurity who rely on these critical state-funded programs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northampton City Council calls upon MA Governor Maura Healey, MA Senate President Karen Spilka, MA Speaker of the House Ron Mariano, the MA Senate Committee on Ways and Means, and the MA House Committee on Ways and Means to support an additional \$10 million in a supplemental budget to fully fund the Healthy Incentives Program to ensure food and nutritional security for the people of the Commonwealth; to allocate \$25 million to fully fund HIP in the coming fiscal year’s budget; and to support passage of State Senate bill SD.829, “An Act relative to an agricultural healthy incentives program,” to make HIP a permanent program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Administrative Assistant to the Northampton City Council forward copy of this resolution to each of the individuals and offices named above, as well as to Northampton Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra and Northampton’s State Senator Joanne Comerford and State Representative Lindsay Sabadosa, and to local food assistance and farming system organizations: CISA, Northampton WIC, Grow Food Northampton, Food Bank of Western MA, Northampton Survival Center, Manna, Cathedral in the Night, and CAPV.

In City Council, February 20, 2025
Adopted in Final Reading on Roll Call Vote of 8 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent (Councilor Perry absent)

Attest: *Laura Krutzler* , Clerk of Council

Passed final reading and enrolled.
I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Northampton City Council on February 20, 2025

Per Charter Section 3-6, non-binding resolutions are not required to be presented to the Mayor for approval.

Attest: *Laura Krutzler* , Clerk of Council