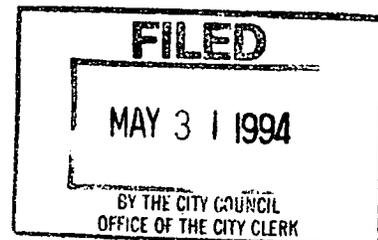


6.B.1



FOR AGENDA:
MAY 31, 1994
2:00 P.M.

TO: SACRAMENTO CITY COUNCIL
FROM: SACRAMENTO COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING
CITY/COUNTY HUNGER COMMISSION
RE: SENIOR NUTRITION AND HUNGER REPORT
DATE: MAY 24, 1994



RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE SACRAMENTO CITY COUNCIL ENDORSE THE SENIOR NUTRITION AND HUNGER REPORT, INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS.

Last spring the Commission on Aging and Hunger Commission were selected by the Urban Institute of Washington, D.C. to coordinate Sacramento's participation in a national survey of hunger among seniors. In fact, Sacramento was the first of only 16 communities throughout the country to conduct the Institute's research. The Urban Institute released its report last fall, including a section specific to Sacramento County, which is available through either of the Commissions. Since release of that report, the local task force has completed an Executive Summary and recommended a local action plan which has been approved by both the Commission on Aging and Hunger Commission.

We are asking the City Council to endorse the report, including recommendations. We are not asking for any fiscal resources, although we are asking the City Neighborhood Services Department to be active in the implementation of several of the recommendations. We look to local government as a vital player in creative problem solving and in encouraging and supporting collaborative efforts.

Please call either Kay Merrill at 447-7073, ext. 37 or Linda Burkholder, 447-7063, ext. 25 if you have any questions. Members of both Commissions will be in attendance on May 31 when the Council discusses this issue. Prior support is being sought from all the agencies being designated for lead roles. Attached find letters of support from several of these agencies.

attachments

SENIOR NUTRITION AND HUNGER REPORT
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
1993 - 1994

ESECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHY DID WE DO THE SENIOR HUNGER STUDY?

In 1992, the Sacramento County Commission on Aging and the Sacramento City/County Hunger Commission became mutually concerned about a puzzling trend in our community. Participation by seniors in subsidized nutrition programs was shrinking or stabilized, while greater numbers of seniors were lining up at local food closets and soup kitchens. Why, asked both Commissions, were seniors going to emergency food agencies in ever increasing numbers, yet not using subsidized senior nutrition programs to the greatest extent possible?

Thus began a local project to explore this trend and to get a clear picture of how well Sacramento's seniors were meeting their food needs. The Commissions invited representatives from senior and emergency food agencies and other community volunteers to help, and a local study was launched. However, just as Sacramento prepared itself to survey local seniors, the Commissions learned about a national study of senior nutrition, being organized by the Washington, D.C. research group, the Urban Institute.

An inquiry from the local study group resulted in Sacramento's selection as the first of sixteen communities across the country to be involved in the Urban Institute's comprehensive study. The Urban Institute provided tremendous technical assistance and editorial support to the Sacramento effort, and Sacramento reciprocated by offering leadership in revising the Institute's drafted survey instruments.

The experience and results of this project are outlined in this Executive Summary. Special emphasis is, of course, placed on local data and implications, with some reference to national data comparisons. The Urban Institute's analysis of Sacramento data is also available for review at either Commission office. The information presented in this report clearly illustrates a need for local action in better meeting Sacramento seniors' nutritional needs.

WHAT IS FOOD INSECURITY?

Food security is the condition under which an individual can obtain a culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet, through non-emergency food channels, at all times. Food security depends upon availability, affordability, and accessibility of food.

An individual experiences food insecurity when they worry about getting enough to eat....when the home does not always have adequate food, when the individual cannot always afford to buy enough food, and/or when the individual cannot always get to the markets or food programs. In the case of the elderly, the definition also included circumstances where

the older person cannot prepare or gain access to the food in the household.

In general terms, food insecurity often results from economic hardship, and food security can often be achieved when an individual has adequate financial resources. In the case of seniors, this factor applies, as do other considerations such as mobility and health.

HOW WAS THE STUDY DONE?

The Urban Institute study includes two components: 1) a national survey using a mailed questionnaire to collect statistically representative national data; and, 2) surveys of selected local communities to gather data from low-income seniors who might not be reached by or willing to respond to a mailed survey.

The National Survey. The national mail survey was sent to a random sample of 3,500 households with at least one member 65 or older, from which 2,734 responses were received (78 percent response rate).

The Local Survey. Sacramento, one of sixteen communities that participated in local surveys, was chosen in part because of the local effort already underway and the unique collaboration between the Commissions on Aging and Hunger. Sacramento's demographic diversity was also an important factor in its selection as a survey community.

In order to limit the local survey to two neighborhoods, as requested by the Urban Institute, Sacramento's task force rated each designated Community Planning Area (CPA) according to the following indicators: total number of seniors 65+, number of minority seniors, persons 65+ living alone; persons 65+ below the poverty level; and number of seniors 75+. After analyzing the CPA statistics, the Central City and East Broadway CPAs were chosen as the neighborhoods to be surveyed. Sampling targets were developed to ensure that the final sample of seniors interviewed would accurately represent the senior residents of these CPAs.

The survey questions were designed to accomplish two goals:

- * to describe accurately the degree of food insecurity among seniors who use special meal services, i.e., congregate or home delivered meals programs
- * to describe accurately the degree of food insecurity among all seniors in the neighborhoods selected for surveying.

To accomplish these two goals:

- * permission to conduct surveys was requested of directors and site managers of targeted sites
- * approximately 30 volunteers, including members of both Commissions, were recruited, trained and deployed to sites
- * random sampling techniques were used to select interview candidates

- * 110 interviews were completed with seniors who were using congregate or home delivered meals programs
- * 295 surveys were completed at community sites, including restaurants, grocery stores, housing complexes, churches and community centers

HOW WAS FOOD INSECURITY MEASURED IN THE STUDY?

Five questions were asked to measure food insecurity:

- * Have there been days when you had no food in the house and no money or food stamps to buy food?
- * Have you had to choose between buying food and buying medications?
- * Have you had to choose between buying food and paying rent or utilities?
- * Have you skipped meals because you had no food in the house and no money or food stamps to buy food?
- * In the past six months, has anyone in your household done any of the following because there wasn't enough food to eat, or you thought that soon you might not have enough food?

WHAT DID WE FIND OUT?

- 1) A significant number of seniors in Sacramento are at risk of food insecurity.
- 2) Sacramento's seniors, compared to the national sample, were:
 - less likely to be currently married
 - Sacramento area residents for ten or more years
 - considerably older
 - more likely to live alone
 - more likely to have less than a high school education
 - hovering just above the poverty line (101 - 125% of poverty)
 - far more likely to pay for housing
 - more likely to rely solely on SSI and Social Security
 - more likely to experience two or more indicators of food insecurity
- 3) Sacramento seniors who use congregate or home delivered meals, compared to other Sacramento seniors interviewed, are more likely to be:
 - widowed, divorced, separated or never married
 - less educated
 - living alone
 - taking three or more prescription drugs
 - lacking anyone to help them if they get sick
 - eating alone
 - poorer
 - experiencing food insecurity

- 4) It is clear that many seniors who use the nutrition programs need the food provided to avoid food insecurity.

Other relevant facts highlighted by the local data include:

- the combined Sacramento samples are about three-fifths female, close to the national sample
- the meal sample has half again as many 60 - 64 year olds as the community sample
- the meal programs appear to draw more whites and slightly more Hispanics than would be expected from the presence of these groups in the community

In addition to the data compiled through the formal survey process, the Sacramento Study Group has identified other factors or indicators which are relevant to the discussion of food insecurity among Sacramento's seniors. For example:

- * Geographic gaps exist in Sacramento County's network of home delivered meals services, leaving sections of the county unserved
- * Weekend and holiday meal service is virtually unavailable to seniors who use home delivered or congregate meal programs
- * The Community Information Center, which is Sacramento's telephone referral service for health and human services, reported in November, 1993 that food aid was the third most requested information by seniors, right behind health services and housing and shelter information; transportation and financial assistance were the fourth and fifth items most requested
- * Outreach workers are reporting anecdotally that seniors are increasingly homebound by choice, because of fear for personal safety, especially in "low-income" neighborhoods where drug and gang activity is on the rise; such seniors have often identified food as their primary need
- * Older Sacramentans may be reluctant to request food assistance because of historical sensitization against "welfare" or asking for help; this potential barrier for seniors could negatively affect food security
- * Problems and services related to food were frequently identified in a recent needs assessment survey of persons 60 years of age and older conducted by Area 4 Agency on Aging. In Sacramento County, the 1,008 respondents frequently identified that preparing meals for themselves (21.7%), getting to a congregate nutrition site (14.9%) and paying for nutritious food (17.7%) is a serious or minor problem. They indicated a high awareness of the following available food-related services: senior discount programs (41.6%), surplus foods/food banks (51.5%), congregate meals (49.0%) and home delivered meals (46.6%). They also indicated that they had utilized these services in the past 12 months: senior discount programs (22.1%), surplus foods/food banks (23.9%), congregate meals (31.6%) and home delivered meals (7.1%). One in three of

all respondents to the A4AA survey in Sacramento County indicated that they are living below 125% of poverty.

- * Sacramento County's senior nutrition programs have been told that funding reductions will occur in the next fiscal year. In response, the community must pull together to explore creative and collaborative responses to this challenge.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THESE FINDINGS?

- * It is evident that Sacramento's senior population experiences significant levels of food insecurity.
- * Federally-funded senior nutrition programs are of vital use to older Sacramentans who most need the food assistance.
- * Many local seniors who are at risk of food insecurity need, but are not benefitting from, federally-funded nutrition programs.
- * Many of Sacramento's surveyed seniors, while not officially "poor" (they live at 101-125% of poverty) are forced to make painful choices such as whether to buy food or medications.
- * Current outreach efforts are not adequately reaching Sacramento's ethnically diverse senior population.
- * Home delivered meals programs are inaccessible to some seniors simply because of where they live in the county.
- * Seniors may risk hunger on weekends and holidays because of the lack of access to home delivered or congregate meals programs.
- * Identifying additional sources of funding and food to supplement the resources provided by shrinking Older Americans Act funds is imperative.

WHAT IS RECOMMENDED FOR ACTION?

RECOMMENDATION ONE

Close geographic service gaps for senior nutrition programs.

Lead Agency
A4AA

Coordinating agencies
nutrition providers
Hunger Commission
City Neighborhood Services Dept.

RECOMMENDATION TWO

Secure additional sources of funding and low cost food supplies to supplement Older Americans Act funding.

Lead Agency
CoA/Hunger Comm.

Coordinating agencies
A4AA
senior nutrition providers
churches
emergency food network
local government
service clubs

RECOMMENDATION THREE

Ensure adequate senior nutrition program services through collaboration and creative problem solving, focusing on:

- o improving access for isolated, low income, minority seniors
- o providing for weekend and holiday coverage at some sites or in certain low income geographic areas
- o increasing collaboration among congregate and home delivered meals programs
- o recommending ways to improve transportation to program sites
- o exploring use of school facilities as senior nutrition sites

Lead Agency
A4AA

Coordinating agencies
senior nutrition providers
churches
emergency food network
service clubs
business/Chambers of Commerce
schools
RT/Paratransit
City Neighborhood Services Dept.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR

Ensure maximum possible use of senior nutrition programs through community education targeted to:

- o Sacramento's diverse senior population
- o isolated seniors
- o those with low or limited incomes
- o pre-retirement age persons
- o civic and religious leaders

Lead Agency
A4AA

Coordinating agencies
service providers
churches
CBO's
Chambers of Commerce
County departments
City Neighborhood Services Dept.
media
utilities companies
Social Security Adminis.

RECOMMENDATION FIVE

Encourage business and industry to become more involved in helping seniors to achieve food security by:

- o donating microwaves
- o supporting employee volunteerism
- o providing personnel to serve or deliver meals on holidays and weekends
- o offering job sharing opportunities that will attract senior applicants

Lead Agency
CoA/Hunger Comm.

Coordinating agencies
business/industry
Chambers of Commerce
business schools
United Way At Work
Sacramento Senior Center

RECOMMENDATION SIX

Continue to include communal and private cooking facilities in any new or remodeled single room occupancy hotels.

Lead Agency
SHRA

Coordinating agencies
CoA/Hunger Comm.
CSPC
Camellia City Center
Downtown Business Assoc.

RECOMMENDATION SEVEN

Explore value and feasibility of conducting food stamp outreach to eligible seniors

Lead Agency
Depart. Human Assistance

Coordinating agencies
Hunger Commission
Legal Center Elderly/Disab.
Social Security Admin.

RECOMMENDATION EIGHT

Ensure implementation of relevant recommendations from Sacramento's Aging Boom.

Lead Agency
Commission on Aging

Coordinating agencies
A4AA
Hunger Commission

RECOMMENDATION NINE

Evaluate feasibility of community-wide blanket insurance coverage for volunteers involved with any recognized, participating senior nutrition program.

Lead Agency

To be determined

Coordinating agencies

nutrition providers
volunteer programs
insurance agencies

RECOMMENDATIONS TEN

Support the current effort to broaden the community's volunteer recruitment and retention systems.

Lead Agency

Commission on Aging

Coordinating agencies

County DHHS volunteer program
County DHA volunteer program
City Neighborhood Services Dept.
Volunteer Center
RSVP
AARP
churches
Sutter Shares Program

RECOMMENDATION ELEVEN

Increase capacities and effectiveness of emergency food services.

Lead Agency

Hunger Commission

Coordinating agencies

emergency food network
A4AA
nutrition providers
Camellia City Center
City Neighborhood Services Dept.

RECOMMENDATION TWELVE

That the Community Services Planning Council, as parent agency to both the Commission on Aging and City/County Hunger Commission, be encouraged to apply for federal full-time volunteer positions to offer technical assistance to lead agencies in implementing their assigned tasks.

Lead Agency

Community Services Planning Cncl

Coordinating agencies

CoA/Hunger Comm.

ROLE OF LEAD AGENCIES

As envisioned by the Hunger Study Task Force, it is not the responsibility of the lead agencies to accomplish the recommendations themselves. Rather, they are to bring together other agencies, providing the facilitation and coordination needed to ensure creative problem solving. Senior consumers should be included. In addition, they would report progress to the Commission on Aging and Hunger Commission, and ultimately to the Board of Supervisors and City Council.

RECOMMENDED TIMELINE

Lead agencies should convene their respective coordinating agencies and groups within six months and make progress reports to the Commission on Aging and Hunger Commission within one year.

ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Sacramento County Commission on Aging and the City/County Hunger Commission urge local governmental bodies to become active partners in the community's efforts to implement these recommendations. Local government must play a vital role in creative problem solving, and in encouraging and supporting collaborative efforts.

MONITORING ROLE

The Commission on Aging and the Hunger Commission shall jointly receive and review progress reports from lead agencies and compile semi-annual reports for presentation to the Board of Supervisors and City Council.

CONCLUSION

The existence of hunger and food insecurity among seniors in Sacramento is a tragic fact. This community, through its well orchestrated study and follow-up efforts, has demonstrated a strong ability to effectively address this tragedy. Armed with a commitment from service providers, local government, area businesses, advocates and the religious community, Sacramento will quickly ensure that no senior must wonder about the source of her next meal.

a:senutrst.rec

March 19, 1994

Kay Merrill, Program Manager
Commission on Aging
Community Services Planning Council, Inc.
909 12th Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, Ca. 95814

SUBJECT: Senior Nutrition and Hunger Report

Dear Kay:

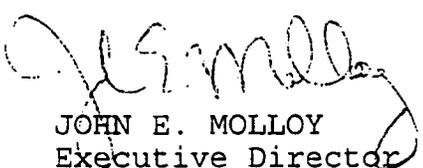
Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this very interesting and important report. I am pleased to see that the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency can, in some way, contribute to improving the nutritional plight of low-income senior persons.

With specific reference to Recommendation six, we concur that communal and private cooking facilities should be included in any new or remodeled single room occupancy hotel. We will continue to include them in facilities that the Agency assists. For your information, one new SRO was recently completed; a second new SRO is in the design stage; one existing SRO is undergoing substantial rehabilitation and another will begin rehabilitation shortly. All four include congregate kitchens. The first two have some food preparation equipment in the rooms.

Please call if this agency can assist your efforts in the future. If you wish more information on our SRO program, please call Lester Smith, Program Manager in the Housing Development Division (440-1359).

P.O. Box 1834 Sincerely,

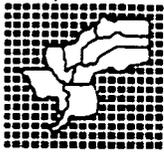
Sacramento


JOHN E. MOLLOY
Executive Director

CA 95812-1834

916-444-9210





Area 4 Agency on Aging

2862 Arden Way • Suite 101 • Arden Office Park • Sacramento, California • 95825-1389 • (916) 486-1876 • Fax (916) 486-9454

April 29, 1994

Kay Merrill, Program Manager
Commission on Aging
909 - 12th Street, Suite 200
Sacramento CA 95814

Dear Kay:

Forgive our delay in providing feedback to you regarding the draft report on the status of hunger and food services among seniors in Sacramento. As you know we have been immersed in the RFP process as well as experiencing staff changes.

The survey data is significant documentation of a serious problem for Sacramento's elderly, "food insecurity".

In regard to the recommendations for action, A4AA agrees to serve as the lead agency for recommendations #1, #3, and #4. Concerning recommendation #9, every nutrition program funded by A4AA must have volunteer insurance coverage. If the Commissions wish to explore a group insurance plan for volunteers, RSVP or the Volunteer Center would be appropriate lead agencies.

I note that the question posed in paragraph one of the report was not answered in the draft summary.

Participation by seniors in subsidized nutrition programs was shrinking or stabilized, while greater numbers of seniors were lining up at local food closets and soup kitchens. Why, asked both Commissions, were seniors going to emergency food agencies in ever increasing numbers, yet not using subsidized senior nutrition programs to the greatest extent possible?

In Sacramento county, all congregate nutrition sites are serving close to or at capacity. However, your data indicates that of the seniors surveyed only 49% indicated an awareness of congregate meals, and 31.6% had utilized this service. A4AA would

Kay Merrill, Program Manager

April 8, 1994

Page 2

support a recommendation to further study reasons for lack of participation in congregate meal programs such as lack of awareness, safety issues and transportation. These issues can also be addressed in Recommendation #4. A4AA is also concerned about the lack of service to underserved areas such as Meadowview, and would hope that the issue of funding for such services will also be addressed by the lead and coordinating agencies studying Recommendation #2.

A4AA's representative to the Hunger Commission will be Gloria Pertrul. Please contact her if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deanna Lea", with a large circular flourish at the beginning.

Deanna Lea
Executive Director

DL:PMc.j



COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN ASSISTANCE

2433 Marconi Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95821-4807
(916) 978-2101

PENELOPE CLARKE
director

LIN BATTEN
interim deputy director
public assistance

LYNN HISELEY
deputy director
administration

CHERYL S. DAVIS
deputy director
community services

May 5, 1994

To Whom It May Concern:

Senior Nutrition Services (SNS) is pleased to endorse the senior nutrition report and its recommendations for action, recently released jointly by the Sacramento County Commission on Aging and the Sacramento City/County Hunger Commission. Senior Nutrition Services shares the concerns expressed by the two commissions, related to the findings of hunger and food insecurity among Sacramento's seniors. As providers of nutrition services to seniors, we lament the fact that limited funding from federal government has stopped SNS and its fellow senior nutrition agencies from meeting the expanding food needs of seniors in this community. We acknowledge the challenges presented in the report's recommendations, and agree to coordinate in exploring creative solutions and strategies for eliminating food insecurity for older residents of our county.

SNS has been an active member of the report's task force, and looks forward to continuing our role in the local collaborative responses.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katey Miller".

Katey Miller, Bureau Chief
Senior Nutrition Services

KM/nf



Serve Our Seniors Inc.

9281 OAK AVE., ORANGEVALE, CALIFORNIA 95662 • 988-3476

May 9, 1994

Executive Director
Joan Barry, MSW, ACSW

President
R. Dean Neeley

1st Vice President
Patricia Carlson

2nd Vice President
Esther Rablin

Treasurer
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Secretary
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DIRECTORS
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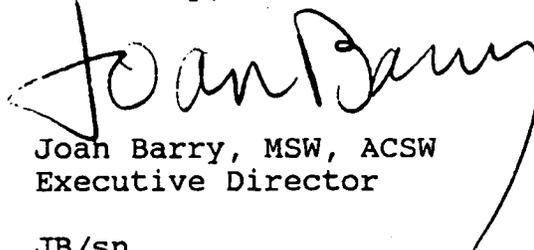
Honorary Director
Betty Scheetz

To Whom It May Concern:

Service Our Seniors, Inc. is pleased to endorse the senior nutrition report and its recommendations for action, recently released jointly by the Sacramento County Commission on Aging and the Sacramento City/County Hunger Commission. Senior Nutrition shares the same concerns expressed by the two commissions, related to the findings of hunger and food insecurity among Sacramento's seniors. As providers of nutrition services to seniors, we lament the fact that limited funding from federal government has stopped Serve Our Seniors and its fellow senior nutrition agencies from meeting the expanding food needs of seniors in this community. We acknowledge the challenges presented in the report's recommendations, and agree to coordinate in exploring creative solutions and strategies for eliminating food insecurity for older residents of our county.

Serve Our Seniors has followed the progress of the task force's effort and looks forward to participation in expanding efforts to respond to this important identified need of the senior population. Congratulations for your efforts!

Sincerely,



Joan Barry, MSW, ACSW
Executive Director

JB/sn

Women's Civic Improvement Club of Sacramento, Inc.

3555 3rd Avenue
Sacramento, California 95817
(916) 457-8661

President
Lula M. Jones

Executive Director
Callie I. Carney

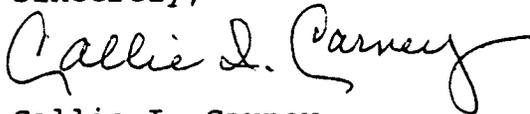
May 9, 1994

To Whom It May Concern:

The Women's Civic Improvement Club of Sacramento, Inc. is pleased to endorse the senior nutrition report and its recommendations for action, recently released jointly by the Sacramento County Commission on Aging and the Sacramento City/County Hunger Commission. WCIC shares the concerns expressed by the two commissions, related to the findings of hunger and food insecurity among Sacramento's seniors. As providers of nutrition services to seniors, we lament the fact that limited funding from federal government has stopped WCIC and its fellow senior nutrition agencies from meeting the expanding food needs of seniors in this community. We acknowledge the challenges presented in the report's recommendations, and agree to coordinate in exploring creative solutions and strategies for eliminating food insecurity for older residents of our county.

WCIC has been an active member of the report's task force, and looks forward to continuing our role in the local collaborative response.

Sincerely,



Callie I. Carney
Executive Director

CC/elh





May 3, 1994

Honorable Heather Fargo
Sacramento City Council
915 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814



Dear Councilwoman Fargo:

Last spring the Commission on Aging and Hunger Commission were selected by the Urban Institute of Washington, D.C. to coordinate Sacramento's participation in a national survey of hunger among seniors. In fact, Sacramento was the first of only 16 communities throughout the country to conduct the Institute's research. To gather data, 405 in-person interviews were conducted in the downtown and East Broadway planning areas. The Urban Institute released its report last fall, including a section specific to Sacramento County, which is available through either of the Commissions.

Since release of the report, the local task force has completed an Executive Summary and recommended a local action plan which has been approved by both the Commission on Aging and Hunger Commission. We now want to release the report to the media and both the City Council and Board of Supervisors.

Since the survey was done in your respective districts, we are asking you and Councilwoman Ortiz to jointly put the report on a city council agenda. We are asking the Board of Supervisors and City Council to endorse the report, including the recommendations. We are not asking for any fiscal resources, but the City's Neighborhood Services Department is listed as a coordinating agency on several of the recommendations. We look to local government as a vital player in creative problem solving and in encouraging and supporting collaborative efforts.

Please call either Kay Merrill at 447-7063, ext. 37 or Linda Burkholder, 447-7063, ext. 25 if you have any questions. They will call your office next week to follow up. Since May is Older Americans Month, we are hoping for placement on the Council's agenda during this month, if at all possible.

Thank you for your assistance and continued interest in hunger issues.

Sincerely,

Greta Cannon
Greta Cannon, Chair
Commission on Aging

Lakshmi Sreenivasan
Lakshmi Sreenivasan, Chair
Hunger Commission

attachment

G.B.1

For the meeting of May 31, 1994.

Under Afternoon Council Ideas and Questions: Agendized Items

- 6B Executive Summary - Senior Nutrition and Hunger Report, Sacramento California, 1993-1994. [Fargo, Ortiz]

RECOMMENDATION OF STAFF: FOR COUNCIL INFORMATION

VIRGINIA.