



**National Commission on Hunger Public Hearing
Invited Testimony**

July 14, 2015 ♦ 2:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.
Marbury Plaza
2300 Good Hope Road SE
Washington, D.C. 20020

Commissioner: All right. We're going to begin now. Good afternoon everyone, and welcome to a National Commission on Hunger Public Hearing. We are very glad to be here in Washington, D.C. My name is Robert Doar. I am a resident fellow of poverty studies at the American Enterprise Institute here in Washington. Before that, I was Commissioner of social services in both New York City and New York State. But for today's purposes, I am a member, and along with my partner Mariana Chilton co-chair of the National Commission on Hunger.

This is one in a series of public hearings we are holding in an effort to fulfill our charge that we receive from the Congress of the United States. Sometime last year, if you look into our food programs and food policies in the United States and see how we can advise Congress and the Administration on how we could do better with those programs within existing programs' resources and how we can advise the Congress and the Administration on how we can do a better job of maximizing innovative solutions using public and private partnerships throughout our country. We have been to Oakland, California. We've been to Albany, New York; El Paso, Texas; Indianapolis, Indiana; Albany, New York; Little Rock, Arkansas. We will be going to Portland, Maine. We are today in Washington, D.C.

We are glad to be here. We are engaged in a search for information so that we can write a report by the end of October and fulfill our charge to advise Congress and the Administration on how we can improve. I'm going to first turn it over to my co-chair, Mariana Chilton for any welcoming remarks that she'd like to make. Then we're going to introduce each of our [inaudible] members to introduce themselves. And then we'll have our first invited witness of three. And then we will open the hearing up for anyone who has either signed up or who has come who wants to present their views of how we can do better in food policy in the United States. So, Mariana?



Commissioner: Good afternoon, everyone. I want to thank each of you for being here. This is one of several public hearings, as Robert was describing. We're very delighted to be here and to learn from each of you and to listen about what's going on in your own communities through your own experience and wisdom that you've developed out of your professional expertise or personally, your experiences with having enough money for food. Again, our report to Congress is due in the fall. We are meant to advise Congress and the United States Department of Agriculture on how to address hunger in America.

I wanted to remind everyone that this hearing is being audio-recorded. It will then be transcribed and made available on our public website, on our public-facing website. So, this is a part of the public record as well. So, for our first three expert witnesses, they each have a certain allotment of time and then there will be question and answer. And then we're going to have a break, open it again to the public hearing. For those of you who have signed up, would like to sign up, you can sign up outside the doors with our staff outside. So, before we get started, though, we wanted to introduce ourselves on the National Commission.

So, I'll introduce myself. I'm Mariana Chilton. I'm professor of public health at Drexel University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and my primary expertise is in research with families that have young children under the age of four, trying to learn more about their experiences with food insecurity and the health impacts of food insecurity. So, Jeremy, do you want to introduce yourself and then we'll go down the line.

Commissioner: Sure. My name is Jeremy Everett. I'm the director of the Texas Hunger Initiative at Baylor University and also a participant on the Commission. And I'm really excited about hearing what all of you in the room have to teach us this afternoon.

Commissioner: Ditto. I'm Susan Finn. I'm a member of the Commission. I'm a registered dietician and nutritionist. I represent the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics on this Commission.

Commissioner: I'm Spencer Coates, a member of the Commission and president of an employee-owned company based in Kentucky and represent 18,000 employee owners.

Commissioner: Cherie Jamason, Food Bank of Northern Nevada and Reno, Nevada. And I've worked for about 28 years in food distribution and food policy.



Commissioner: I'm Rus Sykes. I'm an independent consultant in Albany, New York. Prior to that I was the deputy Commissioner in New York State and ran the SNAP program. I have a 42 year career, dating myself, on food and nutrition issues going back to 1972. And I'm delighted to be here.

Commissioner: I'm Deborah Frank. I'm a pediatrician from Boston. And I'm also a research colleague [inaudible].

Commissioner: OK. Thank you, Debbie. I will introduce myself and so our first witness is someone known to many of us as a great public servant. I've known Audrey Rowe for a long time. She has both worked in the private sector for ACS and for Lockheed Martin. She's also been senior vice-president and managing director for Children and Family Services and the Chief Operations Officer of the National Urban League. She is now one of the most important policy makers in the food and nutrition world as administrator for the Food and Nutrition Service for the United States Department of Agriculture. But for my purposes, most importantly, she is both a Commissioner at the city level and at the state level in the state of Connecticut. Audrey Rowe.



AUDREY ROWE
ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rowe: Well, thank you very much. It's an honor for me to be here. And, Robert, one of the things that I should also mention is that I was Commissioner for Human Services for the District of Columbia and had responsibility for the SNAP program and operating it here many years ago. I also thought when I walked into this building, that I had a flashback because over 40 years ago I lived in this building along with many other federal and city officials; all of us working in positions to promote equity and social justice. And so, for me it's kind of fitting to be back in this building to be a part of this conversation. And I certainly hope that the individuals who are in this building and participate in our programs will avail themselves of the opportunity to speak to this Commission because I think they have a lot to say.

This work of this Commission is extremely critical and I'm pleased to have an opportunity to talk about how FNS is working in every community across the country to fight hunger and improve nutrition. I am very hopeful that the information that I provide today is helpful to you as you formulate your recommendations to Secretary Vilsack and to the members of the United States Congress. I believe our programs are very effective at combating hunger. But there is still much work to do when it comes to improving access and addressing public perception of these programs. I don't have to tell you what the data says.

The data is pretty clear. We've had extraordinary economic challenges from millions of Americans in the recent years. Long-term unemployment rates remain a concern with 29% of the 8.5 million people unemployed in April of 2015, having looked for work for 26 weeks or longer before that period. Many employed workers are underemployed. We see that in all of our programs. In April, the data from April of this year shows that 6.6 million employed individuals were considered "involuntary" part-time workers who either had their hours cut or could not find full-time employment. Our most recent data tells us that at some point in 2013 approximately 14.3% of all households in the United States experienced food insecurity. Every time I say that I think that that is an astonishing number for this country to allow to continue to see that number of Americans who do not have access to adequate food. And food intake by many of these Americans, and I see them all the time when I travel around, families who, fathers and mothers who give up their meals so that children can eat, children who come to schools on Mondays and are standing waiting for seconds, children who come to school after three-day weekends. And I've watched schools expand the amount of food that they provide to children after a three-day weekend because children are arriving at school hungry. They line up. I was at one school, the program opened at 7:45. Children were lined up at 7:10. So, your work and the work that



you are doing and the hearings that you're having are going to be critical to helping us think about how to address this particular problem.

Food insecurity impacts approximately 19.5% of the households with children under the age of 18. It's a major concern for the elderly. And we've certainly heard some of that at the White House Council on Aging. A population where only about 9% of those who are eligible are actually participating in our program and are having trouble still putting food on their table. Eleven percent of households—and then there's a racial disparity in this. And when I look at the numbers, 11% of the households with a White household head are food insecure whereas 26% of the households with an African-American household head are food insecure and 23% of households with a Hispanic household head experience food insecurity in 2013.

So, there is a disparity; not only a racial and ethnic disparity but also geographically. As I travel around, I get to visit rural areas, tribal lands. And you find continuously a major crisis in their communities with families not having access; not access to jobs, transportation and other resources that they need in order to meet the needs of their families.

I'd love to take some time to talk about how we're dealing with this and talk about the 15 nutrition assistance programs. But because of limitation of time, I'm going to focus on four areas. One, SNAP; the second, the expansion of our school meals program; and third, the major priority that I have invested a lot of my time, personal time and resources, in to trying to close the gap, and that is in summer feeding. And I'll speak a little bit about grants we provided in rural and Native American communities to improve access and nutrition education.

I don't need to tell you that we collectively have a responsibility to help 46 million Americans fight poverty and put healthy food on their table. And we have a responsibility not only to meet the needs of these individuals but also to be responsible and good stewards of the tax payers' dollars as we do so.

The data on SNAP is clear. SNAP's impact on food security is substantial, reducing the likelihood of food insecurity by about 30% and the likelihood of very low food insecurity by 20%. The data also indicates that SNAP supports work. Amongst SNAP households with at least one working-aged adult and nondisabled, more than half of [them] work while receiving SNAP and more than 80% worked in the year prior to and the year after receiving SNAP. So, SNAP does support work. In 2013, the vast majority or about 84% of SNAP participants were working or living with an employed person or were not expected to work due to a disability.



SNAP fights poverty. When SNAP benefits are added to gross income, 12% or three million SNAP households move above the poverty line. If you look at those households that are the poorest, we find that we move about 14% of those households above 50% of the poverty line. SNAP helps the most vulnerable Americans, except as Secretary Vilsack noted this week, about one in five SNAP participants are either elderly or disabled. This week we published a proposed rule aimed at increasing and improving access to groceries for home-bound elderly and disabled SNAP participants. The rule proposes to let grocery purchasing and delivery services run by government and non-profit organizations to accept SNAP benefits as payment for the first time. This will allow home delivery for those unable to shop for food and is an important step toward serving those who are in vulnerable populations. Certainly for the elderly this is a program that I'm very excited about and I've worked with a few programs in Baltimore and other places where we piloted a small project that gave us an indication that for the elderly this was really a way to not only help them have access but to increase their participation in SNAP.

This issue has a particular importance for rural Americans, as seniors in rural communities are more likely to experience poverty. We'll soon begin taking, as a result of an RFP, we're going to pilot about 20 food purchasing and service delivery programs in a one-year pilot. And we'll learn from that pilot. So, we're going to try a variety of different ways. You know, one size doesn't fit all so we need to think about how we can be creative. And we will certainly do a great deal of outreach to non-profits and government entities who want to participate. But this pilot is going to be very important to help us shape our rules and to help us shape the program.

Employment and training: again, another very important aspect of the work that we do in SNAP. The 2014 Farm Bill authorized and funded \$200 million to evaluate new SNAP employment and training in ten states. Those pilots have been released. They're in operation. I'm actually going to Navaho Nation next week to look at the pilot that will be going on in Arizona. I'm very excited about these pilots. I've visited them in Delaware and a couple of other cities. And we're just excited to see what we can learn from these pilots and how we can create clear pathways. One of the very important issues we have to deal with is making sure that we're serving those individuals who are kind of stuck at the bottom and what kinds of resources and programs that we need.

Community eligibility: another very critical and important way to ensure that our children are being fed, and particularly those schools who are participating are seeing increased activities in their school cafeterias, more and more children coming in for breakfast, participation in school educational activities, particularly breakfast programs. I mean I've visited breakfast programs and I've had a custodian pull me aside and say "Lady, this is the best thing you all could have done because now these children come to school, they're not overly agitated. They're very obedient. They go to their classroom. They know they're going to eat and it's a wonderful program."



Summer meals: again, summer has been a very significant disappointment. When I came into the position and looked at the number of children we serve during lunch, during the school year and the number we serve during the summer. We had some constraints based on legislation and the way the program is designed. However, it doesn't mean that we can't be creative and think out of the box and find new ways to ensure that children who live in rural areas, children who live in urban centers where there's crime, where there's heat, making allowances so that families can and children can have access to these programs.

Our electronic transfer project, children's project, has been very successful and we've requested \$66 million more in next year's budget to try and expand that program. What I hope that you will look at is for these programs we need a mix of programs. We need flexibility. We need a way to incentivize community-based organizations that provide the kind of resources, that those organizations need to start up some of these programs. At the same time it's a business. So, we have spent time making sure the community-based organizations who have not engaged in this program before do get the kind of training that is necessary so that they understand that this is a business and it doesn't become a frustrating experience or they don't have challenges that they should not have to face as well as reaching out and improving access.

As I said before, tribal land has been a major area in which we have encouraged summer feeding. Rural housing: until last year, rural housing developers did not know that they could summer programs. So, we're providing that opportunity to rural housing. Using some of our other programs to leverage, we're trying again to be as creative as we possibly can but be responsive to the mandate that has been set for us by Congress.

I am looking forward to the outcome of this hearing. I'm looking forward to the kinds of recommendations that you all will be making. I look forward to working with you as we move forward to implement this recommendation. I can't think of a more important calling than the one that you all have sitting on this Commission because the results of your work will make a difference to millions of American children. And that's what it's all about. So, thank you very much.

Commissioner: Mariana, do you want to go first?

Commissioner: Thank you very much for your testimony. I'm excited to hear about the incredible programming that the USDA has. At the outset of your testimony you said that there are major disparities in food insecurity and there are geographic disparities, regional disparities. But one that I would like to learn more about are the racial and ethnic disparities in food insecurity and hunger. You said among White families, I'm not sure if this is counting children, that 11% of White heads of



household report food insecurity and among African-American it's 26%. That's almost three times, two and a half times the rate, and for Hispanic households, 23%.

Rowe: Right.

Commissioner: What is the United States Department of Agriculture doing to reduce these disparities? What kind of programming can the USDA attempt to do or has done to reduce these disparities or to address them? And if you can't find a way to address these disparities, what do you recommend that we recommend back to you? [Laughter]

Rowe: Well, one of the things that we, as we work with our states—as you know, our programs are administered through the states. We spend a great deal of time and have our staff working with states helping them to understand the demographics of the populations who are underserved and helping them to think about approaches that they can take to serve these populations. The reality is—you know, I know this is on the record so I'm just going to say it—some states are not that interested, if you will, or committed or engaged in supporting individuals who participate in these programs and the racial disparities. I think it's something that we need to look more closely at. One of the groups that I'll be talking to tomorrow are the (80 to?) 90 universities and colleges that are located in many of these communities making it their responsibility to do more research, to do more advocacy, to engage in delivering programs. So, I think we need to understand the disparity a lot more than we do.

Commissioner: Thank you. Spencer?

Commissioner: I'm just interested. So, are you saying that perhaps this disparity is racially motivated?

Rowe: I won't say that. I won't say that at all. I think there are some people who just, their perspective on how they carry out their duties and responsibilities in delivering a program sometimes does not take into account the unique interests and needs of varying populations in their communities.

Commissioner: OK, a follow-up question. We're spending about \$150 billion a year on food programs, which is a staggering amount of money. As you well know, our federal government is essentially broke. And our charge was to try to figure out how to deliver these programs in a more effective way within the funding structure that we currently have, which is a difficult thing to do. And your job is very difficult. I know that. And our unemployment system appears to be chronic. Why do you think that is the case and what do you think we need to do? The food program appears, to



me at least, to be symptomatic of a much larger issue. What do you think causes the food problem?

Rowe: Well, I think part of the challenge that families have is that they don't have sufficient resources to meet their basic food needs, as well as all of the other needs that they have in their households. And if you think about these families, the amount of money that they receive; many of them are working part-time so they have housing costs and other costs associated with transportation, getting to and from work. So, many of our families are squeezed. What we do know is that when you add in the benefit, many of these families are able to move themselves out of poverty and better manage their family needs. I think what we are clearly seeing is that there is a need to focus on employment and training; or certainly on training and providing the skills that are necessary that the workforce is looking for to ensure that individuals have an opportunity for upward mobility.

Commissioner: Do you believe there has been a decline in middle class jobs available?

Rowe: You may have gone over my head on that one. I can't answer that.

Commissioner: So, Debbie, a question?

Commissioner: I'm a doctor so I don't know the answer. I'm just asking. Presumably if you're spending all this money, you're generating economic activities, right, from the agricultural section through the retail section—

Rowe: Absolutely.

Commissioner: —into the local stores. Has anybody done a calculation about suppose we, you know, cut a third of that; what would be the economic repercussions? Never mind the hunger repercussions, which would be awful, but what would be the economic repercussions?

Rowe: Well, one of the things that we do know. For every dollar spent, it has a seven dollar multiplier in the community.

Commissioner: Seven dollars?

Rowe: Seven dollars.

Commissioner: This is WIC, SNAP—



Rowe: This is WIC, SNAP; they all have seven dollar multipliers. So, if you think about the retailers, the grocers, the truck drivers, the farmers, the aggregators, the distributors. All of those individuals benefit from the expenditure of the dollars that we are able to provide through benefits.

Commissioner: And probably most of that can't be outsourced, right, because it's in the community.

Rowe: No.

Commissioner: It can't be sent to India.

Rowe: No, not at all.

Commissioner: Russell?

Commissioner: Thanks. It's always great to see and hear from you. I'm very appreciative I have a couple questions. We haven't talked about the health issues in the Food Stamp program and SNAP program very much. And it's the only program that USDA runs that doesn't have any constraints on the food package. You know, we have the First Lady's issues on school meals, the guidelines and we know WIC. We also knew in New York that the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, particularly soda, leads to obesity and diabetes among children. Why can't we move past this issue and have some limits on what people can purchase with public dollars that clearly are contrary to the public health issues?

Rowe: Well, as you well know, we have youth incentives and we know that incentives work. If individuals have incentives to purchase healthy foods that they will purchase healthy foods in some of the coupon programs and some of the projects that we have, demonstrations that we have run. We are looking at how one could construct a project that would have restrictions on what individuals can purchase but then also trying to understand will they use other funds to purchase the same product.

Commissioner: That's what you're studying, right?

Rowe: And so I think part of what we also need to do is address the education that needs to go on and address the marketing that goes on and address the billboards and all of the things that go on that encourage people to continue to make these types of purchases. So, to say we're not looking at it; we are looking at it. We are thinking about it. We're trying to figure out, you know, how do you do something that is a really good study that gives us good data.



Commissioner: My second question is also about SNAP. I have many but I'll leave it at this one. By your own data, as I recall, you published that over 90%, or thereabouts of all potential SNAP benefits are already issued, as if there are already 100% participation. Doesn't that really say that the people that are not participating let's say have a 70%, 75% participation rate but they've all been getting very low benefits. And would there be any thought to the fact that for some people who don't want to participate, we might want to cash out that benefit because they would have different needs than food and the benefit may be very small?

Rowe: Well, I'm not sure. Again, I think those are questions that we are looking at and we're asking ourselves and we hope to have some resources to do some studies and to look at those kinds of issues. But you know this debate has been going on for a long time. Those of us who have been in this field for the last 20 or 30 years, we still continue to try and figure out the best way in which we can support individuals who are not participating in these programs.

Commissioner: Thanks.

Commissioner: Jeremy?

Commissioner: I have two questions. One I'm going to ask that we can talk about afterwards. One is around how do we strengthen the role of public and private partnerships. That's a major component of our charge. We can reflect on that at a later date or you can submit that forth in writing.

Rowe: I will. I will.

Commissioner: The second is specifically looking—you mentioned summer meals as an area where you've put a lot of your focus in your tenure as administrator. How do we increase access to summer meals in our rural communities? Is the EBT program the answer? I go back to Spencer's comment before with cost being associated, being potentially high. What do you see as the—

Rowe: We need a Texas Hunger Initiative in every state [laughter]. We'll start there. But I do think that the work that's going on in Texas is informing some of our policy directions and decisions. You know, there is one issue that we do have to try to tease out a little bit better. We did 187 million meals last year. We're targeting 200 million meals this year. What is difficult to tease out is how many children are associated with the meals that we're provided. And the way in which we calculate the number of school meals is the same formula that we use for our summer feeding. And it may not be the right formula to utilize. So, we are rethinking and looking at how we can do a better job of the data that we collect.



And I hope you all will also be thinking about data and the kind of data that the department can be collecting to help us better inform our policy decisions.

Commissioner: OK, so we have two more. Cherie?

Commissioner: We're out of time on this particular—so it can be a quick question and hopefully a quicker answer.

Commissioner: Thank you, Miss Rowe. What is being done at FNS to ensure that there is enrollment across food programs for those who may be eligible for others, there is no wrong door policy? When you walk into WIC are you eligible for SNAP, for example, either nationally by cross-pollinating at the federal level or encouraging states to begin employing such practices.

Rowe: Well, quick answer. We're having those discussions with the other federal agencies and trying to determine what is the best way to develop a "no wrong door" application approach so that we can ask questions. But the other is that we're encouraging our states where individuals come into Food Banks or whatever door they come through to be able to ask them about other programs or tell them about other programs that may be available. What I'd love to be able to see is that applications could be taken right there whatever door someone comes through for any one of our programs.

Commissioner: I want to return to the question that Mariana asked you about racial disparities. You and I are both familiar with medical take-up rates. What are the statistics that you measure that with among Blacks, Hispanics and Whites? Are there different take-up rates?

Rowe: I'm going to get back to you on that because I really don't know the answer to that right now.

Commissioner: Thank you very much for your testimony.

Commissioner: All right. Thank you very much, Administrator Rowe. Our next witness is Tracy Wareing Evans. Tracy is the executive director of the American Public Human Services Association, which is a bipartisan, non-profit membership organization representing human service agencies through their top level leadership. Tracy, we're glad to have you. Thank you for being here.



TRACY WAREING EVANS
DIRECTOR OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HUMAN SERVICES ASSOCIATION

Wareing Evans: Thank you. It's wonderful to be here. It's so great that you made the trip to Washington, D.C. And before I start I just want to echo the comments that Administrator Rowe made about the work that you all are doing, how important it is to the country to really take a look at food insecurity in this country and how we can better deliver for our citizens. And so I just appreciate all the volunteer time that I know all of you made and know that it's going to be important to hear your report and then being able to implement, I hope, many of your recommendations.

So, again, I'm Tracy Wareing Evans. I'm the Executive Director of the American Public Human Services Association. We're a national organization based here in Washington, D.C. We represent folks who are appointed by governors as human service Commissioners and secretaries across the country and top level administrators who administer programs like SNAP.

So, I'm going to spend a little bit of time talking to you about what I hear from state leaders across the country in human services, particularly around the federal nursing assistance programs and goals that we have to improve outcomes for our families and communities. So, I want to talk a little bit about what works right now because I think sometimes that gets lost and then focus a little bit on how we can make it stronger and in service, a population health-driven lens for our communities. We think that's a really missing link in a lot of the work that's happening with our nutrition programs, linking more with health and human service programs across the board. And we do have a wide lens. We represent child welfare, employment support, temporary cash assistance, services for people with disabilities and many other programs. So, just as I give you those remarks, understand that it's from the lens of folks who have a wide angle on nutrition programs and how they fit in with other programs that are out there. And we hope to move from program thinking to system thinking so that we really are addressing the needs of communities in ways that leverage resources, both public and private, interested in your question, in ways that really drive better outcomes for our families.

So, we do believe that federal nutrition programs already play an important role in supporting these kinds of results. Most of my comments are going to be focusing on SNAP, as the largest of those programs. It has, as Ms. Rowe just shared with everyone, has significantly alleviated hunger and poverty for decades. And it has meant greater budget stability and contributed to the health of millions of Americans. And so, not losing sight of that as we think about ways to improve it and other nutrition programs, I think is important.



To do so, though, we do think we have to modernize the way in which we think about our nutrition programs and health and human services. We, I think, are caught sometimes in well-intentioned policies that focus a lot on outputs rather than on the actual outcomes that we desire to see for children and families. SNAP I think, in particular, is one that is driven by a lot of compliance; appropriately so in trying to have an efficient program but sometimes probably hasn't evolved as much in terms of modern delivery of services. And we could do more in that and I'll talk about that in a moment.

So, thinking about the work from a systems perspective, there are a couple of advancements that I encourage the Commission to really think about, their application here. One of them is what we know about brain science, neuroscience. The teachings about how families and children, how they have impact, including toxic stress in their lives, which can come from a number of factors, including not having enough food to eat. There's a lot of learning there. We have not necessarily applied it as well as we should have to human services. So, encourage more thinking about what that might mean. And just as an example, when somebody is very caught up in a stressful environment in which they're always worried about what food is going on their table or what their kids are eating, many of the pieces about thinking themselves a year from now and seeing their trajectory is very difficult to do. That's what the science is telling us. So, we have to think about that and the ways in which we engage with families.

And the other piece I would just highlight is there's a lot of interesting work going on around behavioral economics and behavioral interventions and how to effectively engage with families. Now, most of it is happening on the private sector side, right? It happens to all of us every day in the way that businesses track our own ways of purchasing and things like that and they're using that science basically to try to get us to do something else. But there are some real learnings in there about how we might more effectively work with families and understand better why, for example, a certain percentage of folks aren't actually deciding to take benefits and how we might, through behavioral interventions that we'd have to study of course, might see them differently.

So, a couple of points specific to SNAP and then I really look forward to having some question and answer time. But nutrition is vital to building an individual's own health and the community's health and so, again, being able to better align our nutrition supports with what we know about social determinants of health; the obesity issues that Commissioner Sykes just mentioned and others I think are things that we have to spend more time on, and alignment with employment. So, I'm encouraged by the employment and training pilots that are occurring right now. We really need, I think, to understand and study and ensure that as we learn from them that we're spreading what that is that can help families move forward. And we need to do so in light of also understanding the cliff effects. I'm sure you've heard this as you've gone around the country. It's something that I don't think as an entire system that we've figured out very well. Our programs, because they're not aligned



in eligibility and other factors, we often unknowingly create disincentives to folks moving to employment and then moving up in their career because of what might happen to them, including falling off of the ability to have SNAP benefits or other benefits that can have ripple effects in terms of programs and services. And I think we really have to address that as a national policy.

And then a great deal more needs to be done in terms of really streamlining and simplifying the way that the program—I'm talking about SNAP now in particular—works right now. And this is not to say that we haven't made strides. We have. I think that things have happened over the years that have simplified. We've had certain aspects be easier ways. For example, in the program that's out there for many of the services for elderly where we have to do less in terms of some of the verification pieces. Those are important pieces that can streamline the program but we need to be thinking about how to do that more particularly because we have technology and we have a lot more knowledge around business process engineering that helps us deliver on those services.

And so I'll just share with you the thing I hear more than anything from folks who run this program in the states is that they're so focused on the children; again, all with good reason in terms of assuring that benefits are being delivered. But they see in front of them that there are a lot more tools and technology and ways of still making those kinds of determinations and assure that we're compliant and timing but in ways that would streamline the services and spend a lot more time on the actual outcomes for families and less time on those compliance pieces. That probably is the biggest piece I can share with you.

And then, finally, as I move to questions, this notion about being able to test ideas, demonstrations. We have to build that more into I would say nutrition assistance programs and human services programs as a whole for some of the reasons I started in the beginning with; what we know about neuroscience, what behavioral economics might be teaching us, what food generation approaches, which, in effect, is what is actually embodied in the concept of SNAP anyway in terms of children and families receiving nutritional supports. There's a lot in there but it's very difficult for states to move forward in their programs when they're caught in the compliance lens and not really able to test new ideas and caught in some policies that limit them in that way. So, thinking about building and demonstrations, like are occurring right now in the SNAP employment and training are really important in moving us forward.

With that, I will turn it back to Commissioner Doar.

Commissioner: Thank you very much for your testimony. Susan, Dr. Finn.



Commissioner: Thank you very much, Tracy. It was a very thoughtful presentation, some very good ideas. What kind of a grade would you give current nutrition education efforts? I speak of that as a dietician and nutritionist. They've been going on for a hundred years. I think I've been involvement when they first started. I mean, what do you think about them?

Wareing Evans: Oh, I don't think we do very well in that area. I think that there is a great—

Commissioner: I don't either.

Wareing Evans: —I think there's a great deal more. But in the positive sense, there is an opportunity here. And I see this increasingly across the country is systems really operating more across the sectors. So, the way that education and health and human services and public health I think being a big part of that play could come together. In a public health lens, I think if we had a greater charge of nutrition educational from the very beginning, and also helping families understand the impact. It's striking to me, and I hear this. This is a little anecdotal. I could get you some more specifics from state locations. But as I hear about where sometimes breakthroughs happen in service delivery, it's often in those "aha" moments that families have and they didn't know that, you know, rushing to feed a child and not giving them a nutritious meal or time to actually digest that meal, have all sorts of implications for them from a health perspective. And so, very basic things. But that requires educational and health and human services to be talking to one another, along with private providers.

Commissioner: Thank you. Jenny?

Commissioner: Thank you. I'm stealing my fire about brain science [laughter, inaudible] so I'm going to ask you some things. We've been talking a lot about, you know, restricting SNAP to promote health. But has anybody thought about and would it be possible to use the leverage of SNAP around the issues, and I don't know if it was you or Ms. Rowe who talked about advertising, about store placements. In Massachusetts, for example, pharmacies are not allowed to sell tobacco, period, full stop. I wish pharmacies were not allowed to sell sugar-sweetened beverages. Is that a feasible thing to use your economic leverage; not to stigmatize an individual but to change a system?

Wareing Evans: Yeah, I think that there are implications there. I'm not a scientist by any means so I'm on a little bit dangerous ground. But I do think the behavioral interventions, the way that they're designed, they're really designed to be with an existing program. So, you would take SNAP and you might decide to do a rapid cycle evaluation in a community where you basically would test the way in which you engage families. Maybe you actually have services on-site at a grocery store because that's where people go, right, the same



concept that's been used in WIC and other programs. And you see if that's a way that engages. And you have that nutrition kind of direction, right? I've heard all these stories of putting pathways in grocery stores that lead you to the vegetables as opposed to other—do you know what I mean? Have you guys heard this about what people write?

[Commissioners agree].

So, those are behavioral interventions. What has to be part of the design, though, is it is a design process. And so you have to have a willing group. You don't need ten year studies. These aren't randomized controlled studies. These are rapid cycle evaluations where you test a small test against a control group and you see where it goes. I would really encourage that that be part of some of the recommendations that you put forward for USDA. Health and Human Services is doing it right now. They have a program that's called BIAS. I'm going to forget what the acronym stands for. But they have studied similar ideas and, you know, how you would get families in quality child care. So, you could do the same thing in nutrition programs.

Commissioner: Do you think it would be permitted under SNAP to say “If you were going to be a store that takes SNAP, you’ve got to move the soda to the back or get rid of it?” Is that something you could do or is that illegal?

Wareing Evans: I don't know the answer to that question. I'm not sure that you could do that without legislative changes. But I think the more we can show that that works, you know, the more you can drive community change from a public health perspective.

Commissioner: Russell?

Commissioner: Tracy, thanks. It's always great to hear from you. I have a question because I know APH [inaudible] so well and you alluded to but I wonder if you can elaborate a bit. And that's the whole concept of integrated eligibility, particularly with all of the changes under health care and the Affordable Care Act and different administrative dollars to states to try to combine their processes. I think it would make life—and not only just the standards would be nice but what Commissioner Jennisen mentioned earlier, you know, about one-stop shopping.

Wareing Evans: Yeah. Huge potential there. Can [inaudible] some national policy barriers to making that happen I think as effectively as it could. Some are just in the way that we share administrative data. You know, the access to certain administrative hubs of information needs to be strengthened across the sectors and then the eligibility determinations. It's very difficult on the SNAP and Medicaid side to have the kind of effective streamlined eligibility access that leads to that integrative perspective that we want to see because they



are driven by different rules. And that is something that is within the hands of national policy makers to change.

And it's really, again, it's a modernization. For me it's really about saying, well, OK, we know that if we can get services delivered faster in earlier ways to families and we're not caught by the fact about whether someone qualifies for Medicaid or for SNAP or vice versa, we're serving families better and ultimately reducing tax-payer dollars because we're, I believe, driving down the cost of health.

Commissioner: Do you have any ability to share with us—and this is not for now but if you could share with us any other kind of efficiencies you think would be driven by that kind of integration and ability. That would be great if you've got any kind of numbers because I know it would [of] interest [to] a number of people here.

Wareing Evans: Sure. We'd be happy to do that.

Commissioner: Just a quick question, and thank you very much for—I loved it all. Thank you very much. Talk a little bit about, if you would be so kind, piloting and control groups and so forth. Are you addressing reducing the length of time and administrative hoops for demo projects and waivers and things of that sort, or something else?

Wareing Evans: I think you could do it many different ways. Where I've heard the most interest, and I've actually heard interest from states in this, is a few states really feel like they have really pushed the envelope on access, right? So, getting folks who are eligible signed up and engaged. And they focused, you know, and made great strides but have hit a percentage that they can't move the needle on. And so they're very interested in doing some of those rapid cycle evaluations of working with the behavioral scientists and saying "Well, what if we approached it differently? What if engagement happened in a different way with a particular population? Could we have a different impact?" And so you would bring in folks who are very good at that and say, "Well, we could do these small tests" and that's the kind of thing that I think would get you the most incremental changes.

Commissioner: So, just to repeat back to you, bringing outside experts in, not necessarily CBOs or states but to look at the science that's out there and look at—it's almost like marketing messages and methodology to get to particular populations more effectively.

Wareing Evans: I think it's probably most effective with someone who has that kind of background. I don't think it has to be done exclusively.

Commissioner: That makes sense. Thank you.



Commissioner: So, you mentioned we spent too much time focusing on outputs rather than outcome. If we were to focus on outcome rather than outputs or equal our focus, what would that look like?

Wareing Evans: And it's a very difficult question, right, to move exactly from where our focus is right now because we know timeliness, which is important, right, which is how quickly someone gets a benefit and accuracy. And those things will probably not go away. But where the opportunity is, I think is in a few other really important national policies right now and a couple that have been reauthorized.

So, think about the fact that reauthorized the Workforce Investment Act last year. The Childcare Block Grant was reauthorized and both of those are in implementation stages. There's great discussion right now about TANF. Some discussion drafts actually dropped this week in Congress about next steps in welfare reform.

If you think about all those things together, and we could have a greater understanding about ultimate outcomes for families. Let's say they've lost a job. Well, they're back in employment and they have some bridge supports provided through SNAP. And maybe they have step-downs that happen to reduce the cliff effect. And they're able to ultimately be off of those government supports. You could create, I think, a system that that gives you some measurements and milestones that would paint a different picture for families.

Commissioner: Comparable to what they did in the U.K.

Wareing Evans: Possibly. Yeah, it's worth looking at.

Commissioner: Thank you very much for your testimony. I found it to be very, very interesting and I was very pleased to hear you talk about two-generation approaches. And you said that you need to have more flexibility; that sometimes states get caught up in the compliance and can't create some innovations. I'm very interested in what might be in the way in terms of adopting more two-generation approaches.

Wareing Evans: That's a good question about whether there's real barriers on the two-generation piece. I'm not sure there are. I think it may be more of a lens of thinking about the services across the board. I mean, again, it's because let's say I'm an eligibility worker, right, and I have certain requirements. And I ran this program back in Arizona a long time ago. And I remember being out of compliance and creating new dashboards and how those eligibility workers didn't want to be in the office that had anything that was slightly off, right? So, their engagement, for many of them the only reason they went into social work in the first place is lost, right, because they're so focused on those particular pieces. They've



lost the fact that, “Well, maybe if I understood my community better and was able to deliver light touch to families that simply are needing a simple bridge, short-term.” If we look at rolls, right, we see people come on to SNAP benefits for a short period of time and come off. It really is a bridge for them. Those families probably just need that good, timely delivered system.

But there’s a lot more that if somebody came in our door, we would say “There’s something, a root cause here we’re not getting at. What’s going on with this family?” And people make referrals. Don’t get me wrong. Social workers are incredible. They have the hardest job on the planet. But when we don’t create that environment, when we haven’t said that we’re looking for the ultimate of health outcomes for this family and given our entire community; whether you’re the public sector workers or the public sector worker, which a lot of this gets delivered from non-profit organizations, you know, we sometimes miss the point that we will have a family come back to us repeatedly, cycle on and cycle off. And we haven’t really addressed their root causes which might mean that we’ve missed the whole two-generation approach and we see their children grow up and then they’re coming back into the system.

Commissioner: Thank you.

Commissioner: Tracy, one of the barriers to merging program eligibility and decisions and case management is the funding stream. They come from different groups and that drives costs. There is an idea to merge some of those funding streams and offer states the opportunity to really tackle this problem on their own turf using a merged pot of funds.

In your experience, are there states that are capable of addressing that and coming up with a creative solution that could drive towards outcomes?

Wareing Evans: Absolutely. I think that there are a number of states that have already shown remarkable ability to leverage and bring programs together despite some of the policy barriers. And I think there’s a notion. Dare I say it, but people talk about entitlement programs and block grant programs. And I think as a country we’re a little too caught up in “either/or” and that part of our modernization effort is to pick the best of both, right? So, some additional flexibility that states that really understand and know their communities and some level of assured support, that floor that’s so important to the program. I just envision there’s a lot of smart people here in this room and around the country that we could come up with something that allows more of a flexible nature for states to really do what they need to do; not only as a state but in their local community. Because they can even have differences—I mean you come from New York. There are huge disparities between New York City and a smaller rural area. So, I think it’s possible.



Commissioner: Thank you very much.

Commissioner: Thank you very much for your testimony.



**GEORGE JONES
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, BREAD FOR THE CITY**

Commissioner: Our next witness is George A. Jones, Chief Executive Officer for Bread for the City. He hosted us earlier today in what was a great site visit. We're very glad to have your testimony. Take it away, George!

Jones: Thank you. I also want to repeat I'm really both proud and pleased to be able to speak to the Commission today and to have our community here to hear both my remarks and the remarks of the other advocates and concerned citizens who are here. And I also just want to thank you for your work and the difference you can make and probably already have made and can make going forward.

I am the CEO for Bread for the City, a non-profit based here in Washington, D.C. whose mission is to fight poverty by providing food, clothing, medical, legal and comprehensive social services to families and individuals living on low incomes.

It's probably appropriate that Bread for the City's story is being shared at a hearing concerning hunger and food insecurity. It's appropriate since for nearly 40 years Bread has served as one of the largest if not the largest food pantry operating here in Washington, D.C. Each year we provide more than 25,000 individuals with free groceries designed to supplement personal resources that these community members need to secure food.

But as described in our mission, we believe in a holistic response to poverty. And issues like hunger rarely occur in a vacuum. Hunger, like limited access to affordable housing and quality health care address the consequences of poverty. Through our social services program, for example, we have literally helped thousands of D.C. residents apply for SNAP and other public benefits in a quest to alleviate some of the suffering experienced by those trying to live on no or low incomes.

So, as this Commission considers effective ways to strengthen the federal programs and policies designed to address hunger, like SNAP, School Lunches, the Emergency Food Assistance program and so forth, my first appeal to this Commission is to remember that food insecurity is just one aspect of the persistent burden that is poverty. To the end of addressing hunger, I stand in solidarity with other local and national hunger advocates urging the USDA and Congress to not only reverse past cuts of SNAP programs but to significantly increase the benefit during a time when the income gap between SNAP recipients and the middle and upper class seems to widen with each passing year.

Now, let me say, I just have to say for the record, I didn't get the memo that we couldn't spend more money [laughter] so excuse me for making that recommendation. But it may be



one of the strengths that an organization like Bread for the City brings which is we don't really care about those kinds of rules.

This income disparity is felt here locally and throughout the country. In the very ward where we are conducting this hearing, statistics on hunger and income are startling. Over 42,000 of the 70,000 Ward 8 residents receive SNAP benefits. Fifty-one percent of the children living in Ward 8 live in poverty. Twenty-two percent of the elderly live in poverty. The average income in Ward 8 families is slightly over \$43,000 a year. I'm surprised, by the way, that the number is even that high. Bread for the City families who come to us average about three people per family and the average income for those families is actually about \$7,000 a year. And so, \$7,000, that's right. That's the number I said, \$7,000 a year. So, we're talking about people living with really, really low incomes, sometimes no incomes.

But by contrast, in D.C.—I was talking about sort of income disparities. In Ward 3, this is another startling number. Only about 598 people, 598 people of the 78,000 in that ward receive SNAP; 42,000 in Ward 8, 598. Three percent of the children living in Ward 3 live in poverty. Three percent of the elderly live in poverty. And the average income for Ward 3 families is over \$246,000 a year. And the average income in Washington, D.C. is \$119,000 a year.

So, those kinds of income disparities are sort of the backdrop here in Washington D.C. but they're not really that unique to D.C. And I'll talk a little bit more about that. Exacerbating disparities between the two groups of D.C. residents is the fact that the housing costs in D.C. are spiraling upward at a record pace. I heard that affordable renting costs in Ward 8 will soon [be] at about \$2,000 per month for a two-bedroom apartment, for this ward that we're in, \$2,000 a month! That's \$24,000 a year. You can do that math. And the income average is \$43,000 a year. That means we're talking about people paying more than 50% of their income on housing.

Another statistical comparison worth noting is that 94% of the residents living in Ward 8 are African-American. Four percent of the people identify as White in this ward. In Ward 3, 83% of the residents identify as White and 17% are people of color, 7% Hispanic, 5% are African-American.

Unfortunately, this kind of double and triple digit racial disparity exists throughout the U.S.; worst of all in urban centers like D.C., New York, Detroit, etc. For example, in a study that was printed in the *Washington Post*, this was a study of 2013 sort of poverty statistics for the country, 49% of African-Americans live in poverty, 48% of American Indians, 23% of Whites; in other words twice as many people of color. Fifty-five percent are Latinos. We're approaching two and a half times there. Feeding America reports that African-Americans are more than twice as likely to suffer from food insecurity as Whites.



So, two points I wanted to make is one, these disparities are wreaking havoc on our communities and our country and that we need sort of holistic responses to the economic disparity and the food insecurity that you all are focusing on. Dr. King said in a letter from the Birmingham jail, and this is a really important point I want to get a chance to make before I get that science in. [Laughter] "We're caught in an inescapable network of mutuality tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly."

So, to drive home this point I remember the study that I heard about just a few weeks at the Consumer Health Foundation's annual meeting. And one of the presenters there reported that in 1950 there were sixteen Americans paying into social security for every one person receiving social security, sixteen people for every one. He also reported in that, sort of as a related aside, is that in America today, for every one dollar a White person earns, Hispanics or Blacks earn a little bit more than 50 cents. For every one dollar earned, 50 cents.

Finally the study sort of drove home this point. It projected that by 2060 there will be two people paying into social security for every one person receiving it. And one of those people will be a person of color.

And so, the point I'm trying to make here is that this problem isn't a problem for people of color. This is everybody's problem. And by 2060, if we wait, we will realize that it wasn't just about making sure that dealt with disparities that were affecting people of color. It was making sure that we had a country that could help and support all people aging, as we can do today and we did before.

So, again I thank you for allowing me to speak. I'm going to have to take your questions and I've given you my written testimony so you can get all the details.

Commissioner: Thank you for your testimony.

Commissioner: So much of your conversation with us this afternoon focused on poverty. You mentioned to me in a private conversation, you know, hunger is merely an aspect of poverty, you know, poverty being the umbrella issue. One of the things we heard with a visit with some students at the D.C. Central Kitchen this morning is that housing prices have increased with the rise of the minimum wage here in D.C. One of the things that we're looking at, obviously, is wage rate. That's something that corresponds with hunger, obviously. Well, if we were to raise the minimum wage rate nationwide, if that were one of our recommendations but it looks as if that's only going to cause widespread inflation, then what is the answer to increasing the capacity for people to be able to purchase their own food?



Jones: Well, I'm not an economist or a housing developer, but I do think the connection between income and housing has to be dealt with in tandem. And so, policy makers can't just raise minimum wage and still allow housing costs to spiral out of control. You're right. We'll still sort of be with a disparity between what people have and what it costs to live.

And I've had this conversation with a number of developers who think I sort of see them as being the enemy. In the district, developers almost own this city from my perspective. Maybe that's why they think I see them as the enemy. But it's really not their job to control housing costs. At the end of the day I agree with them when they say they're supposed to maximize profit. But policy-makers aren't supposed to be invested in developers maximizing profit. And from my perspective, certainly locally that is the problem is that policy-makers have to take a much stronger position locally and nationally from the fact that you developers and businesses in general, your goal is to maximize. But our goal is to make sure our society, our cities, our country works for everybody. And there's oftentimes not that sort of understanding or enough of that understanding on the policy-making side. You can't sort of turn away from that responsibility under the sort of guise of capitalism or a free economy or what have you.

Commissioner: George, I really appreciated our earlier discussion. You didn't get a chance to talk about it today but you also mentioned the work you're doing for job preparation for people and the work you're also trying to do to work with males in the Anacostia region, both which I think are very impressive.

We know a couple things about food insecurity. We know that if you are a single parent and we know that if you're not working, you're more likely to be food-insecure. And across all races there's a problem with single-parent households. But it's a large, large problem with absent fathers in the Black community. And I wonder whether you agree that that's an issue and what you might be trying to do to address it. I think that's part of some of the underpinnings of why there might be racial disparities as well.

Jones: I think there's no question that those kinds of dynamics play themselves out in the worst forms in community of color, exacerbating the problem (across?) persistence. But the challenge for, again, for those of us who are on the other side of the (leger?), those of us either on the non-profit side or the public sector is, again, not to focus so much on what to do about the behavior and the realities of the people experiencing these things. What's our responsibility, how to make sure our programs, our systems address these issues as best they can.

And so, for instance, in that issue, immediately the thing that comes up in mind for the communities that we serve—it's not the only issue but another statistic, and I can't believe I'm throwing out statistics. I usually don't know any of them. But for every one White



person that's in prison, there's six Black men. So, you're taking six Black men out of a community versus one. And so, to the extent that men are important in that community, we're at a six to one advantage in communities of color.

The criminalization and the penal system is a public policy phenomenon. And so we, for the policy members and folks have an opportunity to make a difference there because they look at those numbers and say "We can't keep taking six people out, six men. If we think men are important, we can't take six men out of Black communities and one out of Whites and expect to have anything like comparable outcomes in those communities."

Commissioner: Cherie has a question.

Commissioner: George, thank you so much again. And my quick question for you is when you're considering food insecurity; I think we all know that just handing out groceries is not the answer. What other levers, in your opinion, do we need to pull to address this issue holistically?

Jones: So, again, I'd start with housing. You know, Bread for the City has made a commitment this year to spend at least \$300-400,000 on our housing advocacy campaign to really lock arms with the other advocates. And the policy-makers too in the city are trying to figure out in the district this real conundrum we have around affordable housing. Because our perspective is if we don't fix that issue, people are going to have problems paying for food, transportation, any educational goals. And they're going to have problems paying for everything. And so, right now I think the tail that's wagging the dog is affordable housing. That may not be the case all across the country, although probably in most urban areas it is the big thing driving poverty right now.

Commissioner: I too would like to say a special thank you to you for hosting us at luncheon.

Jones: My pleasure.

Commissioner: Very enlightening. I'm asking you this because you're a pro. You've been around on this. Will we ever reach a point by which we're proud that we're measuring the fact that we're decreasing the number of people on SNAP? Will that ever happen?

Jones: That's a good question. I think I mentioned today that I heard the person sitting right behind me earlier today say recently "Aren't we supposed to be putting ourselves out of business? And Greg's talking about expanding." So, it's a similar question. Does the government really get to get out of the food insecurity business?



Commissioner: Will it ever happen?

Jones: It won't happen in the short run. But again, it's interesting and somebody alluded to this earlier. The number was better than the number I even have in my report. But I read that for every dollar we spend in SNAP, it's a two dollar impact, positive impact on the economies where those dollars are spent. And I heard the number was even larger than that.

Commissioner: Seven. Is it seven?

Jones: Yeah, I heard seven. That's even better, right? Well, so I guess the point about that is, you know, nobody wants people to be hungry. And, yes, we'd love to solve that problem. But there are ways for even that phenomenon to be sort of, if you will, a part of the economic engine that is sort of the lifeblood of American life, and probably in every country.

And so I think thinking about those things differently—one of the things I really wanted to compel the Commission to do is to think differently about the implications of having to help people and to not simply see that, one, as simply helping people but also helping ourselves, but also understanding that it's a meritorious thing to do; that this idea, if you want to talk from a moral standpoint, from my perspective as a tax-payer I don't lose any sleep when my dollars are spent helping other people.

Commissioner: Let me say, I've been a CPA for 40 years and trust me, you do not spend your way out of bankruptcy. And we do have a problem here. And for the foreseeable future, we are going to have to provide food assistance and other assistance to people in this country. But my issue is, just like with the social security system. At some point in time we've got to figure out a way to solve the problem. And it seems to me, and I'd sort of like to get your opinion on this, that it's an economic issue as well as a behavioral issue that we've got to provide jobs for people in this country. We are 25% of the world's marketplace for buying goods and services. At some point in time we have to make the products that we buy in this country. We may have to pay a little more for them, but at least the money stays here and it goes to the very people who are sitting in this audience who will have jobs that are making the services and the goods that we buy. And I think, at least from my perspective, I think everybody would feel better if they had a job and could support their family as opposed to having a handout.

Jones: Absolutely, and—

Commissioner: Do you agree with that at all?



Jones: I absolutely agree with that. I do sort of maybe even pessimistically accept that there may be people who are living on the planet right now for whom that's not going to be the case. But, yes, I think the aspiration is for us to have an economy that's, you know, 100% employment. So, that's a great inspiration.

But the thing I would say to you, because what I don't have is sort of an economics answer to your question about how to deal [with] our financial crisis. But I said this earlier at Bread for the City and I'll say this again. We in America have solved some of the most massive challenges in the history of the world: slavery, great depressions, world wars. We figured our way out of some of the most incredible challenges that you have. And oftentimes, not that I was there, but oftentimes I gather that most people didn't know the answer. The presidents didn't know the answer. So, I guess I'm arguing that we shouldn't despair in this moment where we don't have the answer to that question. But what we should do is make a commitment to solve it. And one of the ways to make a commitment, one of the things I'm arguing for, and is admittedly controversial, is we've got a problem with income disparity and it falls along racial lines. And we should be intentional. We should say to ourselves "Forget your politics. That's a problem that's a problem that's driving a lot of poverty and we need to figure that out. We need to be intentional about solving the disparities that are racially based." And again, forget why they happen, you know, I think you asked earlier in the day. You didn't use the term, but in effect you were saying that racism is the problem. And what I'm saying to you is that I'm OK with a world where nobody's a racist but we all were acknowledged that race is a problem.

Commissioner: Thank you very much.