



**Organizational Sign-on Letter Supporting
S.838/H.3327 An Act encouraging the donation of food to persons in need**

January 16, 2018

The Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Massachusetts State House
24 Beacon St.
Rooms 504 & 136
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairman Brownsberger and Chairwoman Cronin,

The undersigned organizations urge the Joint Committee on the Judiciary to report out favorably S.838/H.3327 An Act encouraging the donation of food to persons in need.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, food waste and other organic material make up approximately 25 percent of all waste disposed of every year. This translates into over one million tons of compostable waste landfilled annually, of which 900,000 tons is food. At the same time, hundreds of thousands of Massachusetts residents struggle with access to safe, affordable, healthy food. From a social equity and environmental standpoint, policies and incentives should be aligned to maximize the use of food surplus in ways that connect edible food that would otherwise be wasted with communities in need.

These bills would address these issues through elements such as a tax credit for farmers and others who donate surplus food, and civil liability protections to food donors. Measures such as these have effectively increased donations in other jurisdictions. We encourage the Committee to also consider other recommendations as detailed in the attached document.

The Massachusetts Local Food Action Plan was developed for and accepted by the Massachusetts Food Policy Council, a 17-member entity comprising state agency, legislative, and industry representatives, established by the Massachusetts Legislature and Governor to develop recommendations, including legislative and regulatory changes, to promote sustainability and equity in the Commonwealth's food system. Reducing food

waste is a priority of the Plan, and doing so by increasing the amount of edible food donated to food insecure households is explicitly mentioned in a number of recommendations.

We appreciate the Committee taking up these issues and urge you to report out these bills out favorably. Our organizations are available to provide additional information and connections to practitioners and advocates who can offer further details, at the pleasure of the Committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Berkshire Grown, Great Barrington
Bill Emerson Food Donation Act Awareness Campaign, Bernardston
Boston Area Gleaners, Inc., Waltham
Central Mass Grown Worcester
CISA (Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture), South Deerfield
CommonWealth Kitchen, Boston
Community Servings, Jamaica Plain
Conservation Law Foundation, Boston
Daily Table, Dorchester
Food For Free, Cambridge
Food Link, Inc., Arlington
Island Grown Initiative, West Tisbury
Lovin' Spoonfuls Food Rescue, Boston
Massachusetts Food System Collaborative, Greenfield
Project Bread-Walk for Hunger, East Boston
Sail Martha's Vineyard, Vineyard Haven
Soil 4 Climate, Boston
Somerville Homeless Coalition, Somerville
Spoiler Alert, Boston
The Campus Kitchen at UMass Boston, Boston
The Greater Boston Food Bank, Boston
Tufts Food Rescue Collaborative, Medford
Worcester County Food Bank, Shrewsbury