



Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
24 Beacon St. Room 212  
Boston, MA 02133

House Committee on Ways and Means  
24 Beacon St. Room 243  
Boston, MA 02133

June 10, 2025

Dear Conferees:

We greatly appreciate the strength of both chambers' FY26 budget proposals in relation to local food system needs. Food security is addressed in meaningful ways that demonstrate the commitment of the Massachusetts legislature to a sustainable, equitable, and resilient local food system.

In a few instances, the Senate and House bills proposed different levels of investment for our priorities that will support a more equitable and resilient food system in Massachusetts. The following list identifies the version that the Collaborative supports for each.

- **Healthy Incentives Program (4400-1004):** We support the funding level of \$25,400,000 as proposed by the Senate budget; this level will restore the client benefit caps to the November 2024 levels of \$40 / \$60 / \$80 per month, depending on household size, and support year-round operation of HIP.
- **Food Literacy (7010-1192):** We support the investment of \$1,000,000, as proposed by the Senate, to continue the expansion of the School Wellness Coaching Program and another round of the FRESH Grant; these efforts support food security, public health, job readiness, and the local economy.
- **Local Food Policy Councils (2511-0100):** We support the funding level of \$250,000 as proposed in the Senate budget to support a third round of this grant program which has had a transformative impact on municipal food systems around the Commonwealth.
- **Disaster Relief and Resiliency Fund (outside section):** We support the funding level of \$14,000,000 as proposed by the House, for this fund that was an essential part of the recovery process for farmers from the disastrous 2023 growing season.

We encourage the conference committee to adopt these funding levels for these items, to continue the legislature's robust commitment to the Commonwealth's local food system.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Miller, Policy Director