

Healthy Food Financing: Good for Jobs, Good for Health



Please Support the Massachusetts Food Trust Program in the Environmental Bond Bill

Please include section 12 of the Senate bill in the final conference bill to create the Massachusetts Food Trust

THE NEED FOR HEALTHY FOOD FINANCING

- **Better grocery access=more jobs.** Increased access to food retail options can drive economic growth by creating local jobs and improving economic vitality.
 - The PA Fresh Food Financing Initiative has supported **5,000 jobs**
 - The CA FreshWorks Fund has created or retained **1,362 jobs**
 - The NY Healthy Food Healthy Communities Fund has created or preserved **1,006 jobs**
- **Too many Massachusetts communities have poor access to healthy food.** A study of Massachusetts food access has shown that large swaths of urban and rural Massachusetts lack good access to grocery stores and other healthy food retailers.
- **Significant health benefits.** A significant body of research shows that access to grocery stores is linked to lower rates of obesity, diabetes, and other diet-related diseases.

THE SOLUTION

- **Flexible financing to meet community needs.** This amendment would create a flexible financing program to provide loans, grants, and technical assistance to support the development, renovation, and expansion of healthy food retailers and food enterprises in parts of the state that need them the most. This could include supermarkets, corner stores, farmer's markets, and mobile markets that meet local needs, as well as community kitchens, food trust commissaries, indoor and outdoor greenhouses, and food distribution hubs.
- **Implement the recommendations of the Massachusetts Grocery Access Task Force.** The amendment puts into practice the recommendations of the Massachusetts Grocery Access Task Force, a public-private partnership of leaders from the grocery industry, economic development, public health, and civic sectors that met over the last two years to develop solutions to this problem.
- **A track record of success.** Healthy food financing programs have been set up across the nation, with successful early results, including in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, California, Illinois, and New Orleans. Limited public funding in these places has leveraged significant private investment.