

Candidate Hunger Action Challenge

Ernest Jones



Running for:
San Francisco Board of Supervisors, District 11

"District 11 deserves a place where fresh food is accessible and local businesses can thrive, and I'm committed to making that happen."



What do you think are the root causes of hunger, and what do you see as the government's role in addressing them?

The Lakeview and OMI neighborhoods are prime examples of food deserts, where access to affordable, healthy food is limited or nonexistent. Families in these neighborhoods shouldn't have to take multiple buses or travel miles to buy fresh produce, yet that's the harsh reality for many. The lack of nearby grocery stores means residents often rely on corner stores that sell mostly processed and overpriced items, leaving them with few options for a healthy diet.

This isn't just about convenience. It's about equity. When neighborhoods like Lakeview and OMI are left out of the conversation, we're contributing to deeper issues like poor health outcomes, food insecurity, and generational poverty. The pervasive impact of food deserts on our community is profound, affecting everything from a child's ability to focus in school to the long-term health of our seniors. It's unacceptable.

The government has to step in. We must prioritize investment in these neighborhoods, incentivizing grocery stores to open up, supporting local farmers' markets, and creating community gardens where families can grow fresh food.

We can't solve hunger without access, and that means putting real pressure on the systems that keep food deserts alive. As Supervisor, I'm committed to working tirelessly to ensure that District 11 residents have the same opportunities for healthy living as anyone else in this city. No one should be left behind when it comes to something as basic as access to food.

If elected, how would you ensure coordination between the multiple government departments that fund and administer food assistance programs?

If elected, I'll make sure that the different government departments working on food assistance programs are coordinated and working together. I'd bring these departments together for regular meetings so everyone is on the same page, sharing goals and ensuring resources are going where needed most. It is important to have a clear, citywide strategy for fighting food insecurity, with each department doing its part. We also need better data sharing. Each department collects useful information about who needs help, but we can't fully understand the problem or respond quickly enough if they don't share that data.

Studies have shown food can be medicine. If elected, how do you plan to use your position to improve food-related health disparities?

If elected, I will establish close working relationships with public health departments, community organizations, and city agencies to execute food access programs and health initiatives. I will actively support policies that enhance healthy food programs for low-income families, such as increasing funding for vouchers that can be redeemed at farmers' markets and promoting grocery stores in underserved areas like Lakeview and OMI. I will also collaborate with city departments to allocate funds for community-based programs that provide nutrition, cooking, and healthy eating education in schools and community centers. Locally in our community we have Hummingbird Farm that uses food as medicine for community members. I would make the connection to the Food Bank and make sure that the farm has the support it deserves.

The San Francisco-Marín Food Bank will be closing all Food Bank-run Pop-up Pantries by June 2025 due to cuts in government pandemic funding. This program currently serves 11,400 households, 75% of which are estimated to lose access to free weekly groceries when the funding ends. If elected, what would you do to ensure that all San Franciscans have access to nutritious foods?

As Supervisor, I'll work to bring a farmer's market to District 11, giving residents access to fresh, affordable produce while supporting local farmers and small businesses. These markets will create regular community gatherings and revitalize our commercial corridors, turning them into vibrant spaces where neighbors connect and support local vendors. It's not just about providing healthy food options—it's about strengthening our community and boosting the local economy. District 11 deserves a place where fresh food is accessible and local businesses can thrive, and I'm committed to making that happen. I'll also advocate for increased funding for food programs and collaborate with community organizations to ensure no one in San Francisco goes hungry.