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## Massachusetts Law Reform Institute Calls on Trump Administration to End Shutdown, Stop Harming Vulnerable Populations

*At 30 Day Mark, MLRI Asks Governor Baker to Rally Fellow Governors to Urge an Immediate End to the Shutdown*

**Boston, Mass.** – As the federal government shutdown nears its 30<sup>th</sup> day anniversary, the [Massachusetts Law Reform Institute](#) (MLRI), a leading nonprofit poverty law and policy center, is calling on the Trump Administration and Congress to immediately end the shutdown.

“The partial government shutdown is creating a tremendous hardship for hundreds of thousands of hard-working federal employees. But we must not forget or ignore the impact it is also having on hundreds of thousands of other people: individuals and families who receive federally-funded benefits for food assistance, housing, and a number of other critical needs. This shutdown is creating confusion and chaos for low income seniors, children, veterans, people with disabilities, and struggling working-poor families across the nation,” said Georgia Katsoulomitis, MLRI’s executive director. “This situation is having real-life consequences on very vulnerable and very poor people, a fact that is forgotten by the Administration.”

Of immediate concern are the 770,000 people who utilize the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides \$100 million in monthly nutrition benefits to eligible households in the Commonwealth, 1 in 9 residents of Massachusetts. Those benefits are spent at local stores and markets, which means any contraction of the benefit will impact more than just eligible recipients, it will also impact local economies and businesses.

MLRI recently joined the Greater Boston Food Bank, The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, Merrimack Valley Food Bank, Worcester County Food Bank, and Project Bread in releasing a joint [statement](#) highlighting the emergency and where they called on Governor Baker to develop a state “disaster plan” to respond to a potential spike in food insecurity:

This uncertainty wreaks havoc in the lives of low income households who need to put food on the table and in the refrigerator. If the shutdown continues, many more low-income households will need to turn to the emergency food network in Massachusetts.

As the shutdown stretches on, thousands of furloughed workers – including TSA agents and members of the Coast Guard – may need to turn to the emergency food network and SNAP as they find it increasingly difficult to afford food.

MLRI is thanking the members of the federal Massachusetts delegation who are leading the fight on re-opening the government and promoting the rights of immigrant families and individuals, and applauds Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker for publicly condemning and calling for an end to the shutdown. The organization asks Governor Baker to rally his fellow governors to find a solution to end the shutdown and to urge the Administration to immediately re-open the federal government.

“President Trump has never wondered where his next meal will come from, but plenty of Massachusetts residents do. This shutdown has lasted far longer than it ever should have. If it continues, it will result in tremendous hardship, an increase in poverty, and long-term consequences for millions of people. It is destabilizing the economy as a whole, which affects all of us,” said Katsoulomitis. “The real crisis here is that the federal government has been closed-for-business for a month for political purposes. This manufactured political crisis is evolving into a real crisis for countless families across Massachusetts and the nation. That’s unconscionable. We urge Governor Baker to work with his fellow governors across the country to seek an end to this needless suffering.”

MLRI is committed to working with our elected leaders, community advocates and all our partners to support and protect vulnerable people affected by the shutdown and to limit the damage to the Commonwealth that will result from these destructive actions. To help the many Massachusetts families who are confused about the implications of the crisis on assistance programs, MLRI recently developed [information](#) on the status of various benefits programs (that information is subject to change as the situation continues).

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### **About the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute**

Massachusetts Law Reform Institute (MLRI) is a nonprofit poverty law and policy center. It provides statewide advocacy and leadership in advancing laws, policies, and practices that secure economic, racial, and social justice for low-income people and communities. MLRI advances its mission through legal initiatives and policy reforms that address the root causes of poverty, remove barriers to opportunity, and create a path to economic stability for low-income individuals, families, and communities. For more information, please visit [www.mlri.org](http://www.mlri.org) or follow us on Twitter ([@MassLawReform](https://twitter.com/MassLawReform)) and [Facebook](#).