

Justice, Peace and Life

August 2023



Tell Congress to maintain critical food security programs in the Farm Bill

HELP END GLOBAL HUNGER

Congress continues to formulate and negotiate the 2023 Farm Bill, and we continue to advocate on it! The Farm Bill is authorized every five years and funds major domestic and international nutrition programs.

It's difficult to wrap our heads around the stark realities of hunger around the globe. Data show that 820 million people are currently facing acute hunger and 45 million children are facing acute malnutrition. That's sharply up from 2021. The Russian invasion of Ukraine and Russia's refusal to allow wheat to pass through the Black Sea is fueling the crisis, as are floods and droughts caused by climate change, and internal armed conflict in many poor countries.



Catholic Relief Services and Bread for the World are asking us to speak up loudly to protect food aid, and in particular a program called **Food for Peace**, started in the 1950s. Early on, this program shipped tons of American-made agricultural products like wheat and corn to poor countries. More recently, however, Food for Peace has also provided funding for people to buy food in their own countries. This helps to keep farmers in the Global South in business, so poor countries don't have to rely as heavily on imported food.

Development organizations like CRS also use Food for Peace funds to provide farmers in those countries with training on effective agricultural practices. These programs help to address the root causes of poverty and hunger. This short [video](#) explains the history of Food for Peace and how it has evolved.

Unfortunately, a recently introduced bill called the "American Farmers Feed the World Act" (HR 4293) would undermine Food for Peace. Despite its innocuous name, it could increase, not decrease, global hunger.

This bill would essentially dump U.S. commodities on poor countries; many farmers in those countries won't be able to compete with this free food, and will leave their farms and feel forced to migrate. Organizations like CRS won't receive the funding to operate training and nutrition programs.

CRS estimates that if this bill becomes part of the Farm Bill it would mean that Food for Peace would reach approximately 3.65 million fewer people with needed assistance.

At this [link](#) from CRS, you can read how Food for Peace and other international aid programs helped a family in Peru to thrive.

Then use this [link](#) to **write your members of Congress** and ask them to protect and fully fund Food for Peace and other vital anti-hunger efforts in the 2023 Farm Bill.



*Raúl, Lilian and their five-year-old son Dylan carry produce from their farm.
Photo by Erick Josue Hernández for CRS*

Care for Creation through Advocating and Learning to “Green” Your Yard

Sharing your yard with beneficial wildlife



Do you wonder about how to maintain a pleasing garden while being kind to the environment and attracting beneficial wildlife like birds and butterflies? Come participate in a focus group discussion research project to learn more about what you can do!

Researchers from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the Department of Communication are leading these discussions and want to hear from people in our Diocese. These discussions should take approximately one hour of your time, and will take place online (via Zoom). You will be offered a \$35 thank-you gift card to Garden for Wildlife, which sells beautiful native plants.

Interested? Please use this link tinyurl.com/gardenbees to get details of what you will be asked you to do in the study and then to choose a time slot.

Supporting carshares to reduce fossil fuel use

Modes of transportation that run on fossil fuels are one of the biggest contributors to climate change. Organizations called “carshares” reduce the number of cars on the road. As explained by Ithaca Carshare, “Carshares are community-focused, membership-based services that provide access to cars for local trips to people who can’t or choose not to buy their own vehicle. Carshares reduce vehicle emissions as members generally combine carsharing with public transit, bicycling, and walking.” Carshares own fleets of vehicles that members can reserve and use when they need them. They provide environmental, economic and equity benefits, and they don’t rely on public funds for general operations.



Image: Flatiron.com

Carshare programs exist in Rochester and Albany as well as Ithaca, and a new one is in the works in Buffalo as well. However, these programs are threatened by a new regulation that makes it very difficult for them to purchase auto insurance for their vehicles.

The New York State legislature recently passed a bill to rectify this situation. Environmental advocates are now asking for us to encourage Governor Hochul to sign it into law. Not only would this protect the existing carshare programs, it would incentivize other communities to create them.

Please call Governor Hochul's office at 518-474-8390 and ask her to sign bill **A.5718/S.5959** right away. Here are few points you can make when you call:

- *Carshares help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and traffic.**
- *The bill passed unanimously in both houses in June.**
- *It solves an auto insurance market failure in the nonprofit sector.**
- *It will enable the carshare in Ithaca to reopen, will save all carshares in the state, and will help ALL nonprofits access auto insurance.**

Learn more about the advantage of carshare programs: www.ithacacarshare.org/why-carshare/ and why this bill is needed: www.ithacacarshare.org/nonprofit-carshare-insurance-faqs/

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