



# SUPPORT

## **S. 5664-B/A. 2409-B (Klein/Ortiz)**

*AN ACT to amend the agriculture and markets law and the education law, in relation to authorizing school districts and institutions of higher education to donate excess food to local voluntary food assistance programs*

The New York League of Conservation Voters supports S. 5664-B/A. 2409-B (Klein/Ortiz), which would direct the Department of Education and the Department of Agriculture and Markets to develop voluntary guidelines to assist school districts and institutions of higher education in donating excess, unused, edible food to food assistance programs such as food pantries and soup kitchens.

As much as 40% of all food produced in the United States is thrown away, including perfectly edible food purchased by schools and colleges. At the same time, approximately 2.8 million New Yorkers are food insecure. Hundreds of not-for-profit organizations across New York State are working to end hunger and are in constant need of fresh food donations. Schools can help fill this gap by donating surplus edible food. Donation of food that would otherwise be disposed of also has environmental benefits, because landfilled food releases methane, a greenhouse gas many times more potent than carbon, when it decomposes.

S. 5664-B/A. 2409-B would provide schools with guidance on preservation of unused edible food and how to communicate with and deliver food to nearby voluntary food assistance programs. By increasing the amount of excess edible food donated to charity, this bill would both aid food insecure New Yorkers and reduce New York State's greenhouse gas emissions.

For these reasons, the New York League of Conservation Voters strongly urges passage of S. 5664-B/A. 2409-B.

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