Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wednesday, November 4, 2026
12:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.
VIRTUAL

AGENDA

12:00 P.M.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
   Reuben B. Collins II, COG Board Chair

2. **CHAIR'S REPORT**
   Reuben B. Collins II, COG Board Chair

3. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
   Clark Mercer, COG Executive Director

4. **AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA**
   Reuben B. Collins II, COG Board Chair

5. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 14, 2026**
   Reuben B. Collins II, COG Board Chair

   Recommended Action: Approve minutes.

6. **ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**
   Reuben B. Collins II, COG Board Chair

   A. Resolution R43-2026 – Resolution Approving Appointments of Maryland and Virginia General Assembly Members to the COG Board
   B. Resolution R44-2026 – Resolution Authorizing COG to Procure and Enter into a Contract to Purchase Albert Network Monitoring Sensors and MS-ISAC Memberships for Participating NCR Jurisdictions

   Recommended Actions: Adopt Resolutions R43-2026 – R44-2026.

12:20 P.M.

7. **CAPITAL AREA FOOD BANK 2026 HUNGER REPORT**
   Radha Muthiah, Capital Area Food Bank President & CEO
   Sabrina Tadele, Capital Area Food Bank Director of Strategic Initiatives
   Hilary Salmon, Capital Area Food Ban Deputy Chief of External Affairs

   The board will be briefed on results of the 2026 Hunger Report, highlighting food insecurity and hunger challenges in the metropolitan Washington region.

   Recommended Action: Receive briefing.

1:20 P.M. **8. 2027 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FACILITATED DISCUSSION**
Charles Allen, COG Legislative Committee Chair
Monica Nunez, COG Government Relations/Member Services Manager

COG Board members will have the opportunity to provide input on regional legislative priorities for 2027.

Recommended Action: Receive briefing and provide input.

1:55 P.M. **9. OTHER BUSINESS**

2:00 P.M. **10. ADJOURN**

AGENDA ITEM #2

CHAIR'S REPORT

AGENDA ITEM #3

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

MEMORANDUM

TO: COG Board of Directors
FROM: Clark Mercer, COG Executive Director
SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report – November 2026
DATE: October 28, 2026

POLICY BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) – In October, the TPB reviewed updated project concepts and commitments for the I-495 Southside Express Lanes. In November, the board will consider undertaking a new air quality conformity analysis including the project, a key step before voting to add the Express Lanes to the Visualize 2050 plan. The TPB also approved updated performance targets for regional travel time reliability and reviewed draft highway asset targets for pavement and bridge conditions.

OUTREACH & PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

6th Annual Regional Homeless Forum – COG and Kaiser Permanente co-hosted the 6th annual Regional Homeless Forum, uniting government and community partners. COG Board Vice Chair and District of Columbia Councilmember Charles Allen joined attendees to discuss collaborative solutions promoting dignity and health, focusing on housing supply, medical respite care, and federal policy changes.

HR Conference – COG recently hosted the Reignite HR conference, gathering regional HR professionals to share resources and practical workplace strategies. Attendees explored reengaging with purpose, sustaining culture, modernizing performance



Clean Air Achievement: Region Meets Federal Ozone Standard
In a historic milestone, the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) at COG announced at its October meeting that the region has met the 2015 federal ozone standard and is requesting official EPA certification. The region now meets all current federal air pollution standards, recording just five unhealthy air days in 2026, down from 51 two decades ago.

Read a highlight, download the redesignation request, and view the 2026 ozone summary

management, and integrating AI tools. The event fostered a collaborative, people-centered approach to workforce development.

Regional Transportation Conference – COG's Commuter Connections program recently hosted the Association for Commuter Transportation's (ACT) Chesapeake Chapter mini-conference. The event featured transportation demand management (TDM) workshops focusing on vanpools, e-bikes, accessibility, and marketing. Attendees also engaged in interactive Q&A sessions to discuss strategies and share best practices for enhancing regional mobility.



FARM Committee Hosts Largest Annual Tour
In October, the Food and Agriculture Regional Member (FARM) Policy Committee hosted its largest annual tour to date in Prince George's County. More than 60 participants explored the local agricultural economy by visiting family farms, an urban incubator, and a production facility to highlight the vital connection between agriculture, public health, and economic development.

View photos and highlights

TPB Regional Travel Survey – The Transportation Planning Board launched a fall promotional wave for the Regional Travel Survey, running through December. Randomly selected households will receive mailed invitations to participate. Board members are encouraged to use the RTS ambassador toolkit to verify the survey's legitimacy and boost participation.

Learn more about the survey

COG 101 – COG Executive Director Clark Mercer presented to the Leadership Center of Arlington about COG programs and benefits to member jurisdictions and the region.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Clean Air Achievement – COG's announcement that the region is meeting federal ozone standards was covered by Capital Weather and WAMU.

Capital Weather

I-495 Southside Express Lanes– The TPB heard a presentation from VDOT's Nick Donohue on the I-495 Southside proposal, which was covered by WTOP, Alexandria Brief and FFXnow.

FFXnow

Potomac Hydrofoil Ferry Study – The COG Board discussion on a study on the feasability of a Potomac hydrofoil ferry was covered by 7 News, Axios, Alexandria Brief, and Patch.

7News

AGENDA ITEM #4

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM #5

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
777 North Capitol Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002

MINUTES
COG Board of Directors Meeting
October 14, 2026

BOARD MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES: See attached chart for attendance.

SPEAKERS:
Anna Douglas, COG Comptroller
Cindy Dyballa, CEEPC Chair, City of Takoma Park Council Member
Craig Fifer, Northern Virginia Regional Commission Executive Director
Thomas Harrington, COG Multimodal Transportation Director
Ian Marcus, Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee Chair
David Mayer PH.D, Former Washington Metrorail Safety Commission CEO
Clark Mercer, COG Executive Director
Emeka Moneme, Navy Yard District of Columbia Executive Director
Kanti Srikanth, COG Deputy Executive Director of Metropolitan Planning
Ivaylo Tsekov, COG Senior Project Accountant

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
COG Board Chair Reuben Collins called the meeting to order at 12:05 P.M. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. CHAIR'S REPORT
The Chair's report included the following items:
- 2026 COG Membership & Awards Reception – December 9th
- Submit award nominations for an organization or individual for awards reception

3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT CHAIR'S REPORT
The Executive Director's report included the following items:
- National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) – In September, the TPB adopted DMVMoves bus service guidelines to establish regional frameworks for service frequency and hours.
- Food and Agriculture Regional Member (FARM) and Human Services Policy Committee (HSPC) (Joint Meeting) - The HSPCs and FARM Policy Committees met jointly in September for the third consecutive year to focus on food insecurity. The Capital Area Food Bank presented the results of their annual Hunger Report, sharing recent findings and trends in the metropolitan Washington region.
- Chesapeake Bay & Water Resources Policy Committee (CBPC) - In September, the CBPC hosted the 16th Annual Bay and Water Quality Forum to explore emerging utility challenges and regional resilience. Members discussed utility trends regarding affordability, federal funding, and regulatory pressures.
- Climate Energy & Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) - The September CEEPC meeting focused on a follow-up of the COG Board discussion on the Midcourse Review Report, featured a demonstration of the new interactive Climate and Energy Progress Dashboard, and presentations on Montgomery County's climate action progress and COG's economic development strategy.
- COG Celebrates Historic Headquarters Reopening - Hundreds of regional officials and current and former staff gathered to celebrate the grand reopening of COG's headquarters. Featuring Mayor Muriel Bowser, the event highlighted a shared vision for metropolitan Washington's future.

- TPB Freight Subcommittee Tour - The TPB Freight Subcommittee held its second site visit at the I-95 Dale City Truck Rest Area and Weigh Station on September 23, where Virginia Department of Transportation and Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles staff provided an overview of operations.
- COG Convenes Region's U.S. Representatives, Local Officials - On September 23, COG hosted local and state officials and members of the National Capital Region Congressional Delegation.

4. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA
There were no amendments to the agenda.

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 9, 2026
The minutes from the September 9th board meeting were approved. Arlington County Board Member Takis Karantonis abstained.

6. ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS
- Resolution R34-2026 – Resolution Approving Appointments to the COG 2027 Nominating Committee
- Resolution R35-2026 – Resolution Approving Appointments to the COG 2027 Legislative Committee
- Resolution R36-2026 – Resolution Approving Appointments to the COG 2026 Awards Selection Committee
- Resolution R37-2026 – Resolution Authorizing COG to Enter into a Contract and Procure Hazmat CBRNE Multi-Chemical Analysis Units
- Resolution R38-2026 – Resolution Authorizing COG to Enter into a Contract and Procure a MetroTech Bomb Squad Portable Digital X-Ray System
- Resolution R39-2026 – Resolution Authorizing COG to Enter into a Contract and Procure MetroTech Bomb Squad Medium Unmanned Ground Vehicles

Action: The board adopted Resolutions R34-2026 – R39-2026.

7. 2026 CLIMATE AND ENERGY LEADERSHIP AWARDS
The board was briefed on this award program that recognizes local government, educational institutions, and non-governmental organizations for their efforts to achieve local and regional climate and energy goals.

Action: The board received briefing.

8. RECOGNITION OF WASHINGTON METRORAIL SAFETY COMMISSION FIRST CEO DAVID MAYER
The board was briefed on the history of establishment of the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission and recognize the first CEO David Mayer for his years of service. The board adopted Resolution R40-2026.

Action: The board adopted Resolution R40-2026.

9. FISCAL YEAR 2028 MEMBER DUES & REGIONAL FEES
The board was briefed on the proposal for the Fiscal Year 2028 Member Dues and Regional Fees. The board adopted Resolution R41-2026.

Action: The board adopted Resolution R41-2026.

10. APPROVAL OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2027 & FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PLAN AND BUDGET
The board was briefed on the proposal FY2027 Capital Expenditure Budget and Five-Year Capital Expenditure Plan. The board adopted Resolution R42-2026.

Action: The board adopted Resolution R42-2026.

11. PASSENGER FERRY SERVICE IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
The board was briefed on regional studies to consider a passenger ferry service in the National Capital Region.

Action: The board received briefing.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

13. ADJORN
The meeting was adjourned at 1:57 P.M

COG Board of Directors Meeting
October 14, 2026 Attendance

Jurisdiction	Member	Y/N	Alternate	Y/N
District of Columbia				
Executive	Hon. Muriel Bowser		Ms. Lindsey Parker	
	Mr. Kevin Donahue		Mr. Tomas Talamante	
Council	Hon. Phil Mendelson	Y	Hon. Brianne Nadeau	Y
	Hon. Charles Allen	Y		
Maryland				
City of Bowie	Hon. Michael Esteve		Hon. Dufour Woolfley	
Charles County	Hon. Reuben Collins	Y	Hon. Thomasina Coates	
City of Frederick	Hon. Michael O'Connor	Y	Hon. Gayon Sampson	
Frederick County	Hon. Jessica Fitzwater		Ms. Victoria Venable Ms. Sarah Price	Y
City of College Park	Hon. Denise Mitchell	Y	Hon. Fazlul Kabir	
City of Gaithersburg	Hon. Robert Wu		Hon. Neil Harris	
City of Greenbelt	Hon. Emmett Jordan	Y	Hon. Kristen Weaver	
City of Laurel	Hon. Keith Sydnor	Y	Hon. Brenis Smith	
Montgomery County - Exec	Hon. Marc Elrich		Mr. Richard Madaleno Ms. Fariba Kassiri Mr. Earl Stoddard	Y
Montgomery County - Council	Hon. Evan Glass	Y	Hon. Marilyn Balcombe	
Montgomery County - Council	Hon. Kate Stewart	Y	Hon. Natali Fani-Gonzalez	Y
Prince George's County - Exec	Hon. Aisha Braveboy		Ms. Maxene Bardwell Mr. Kevin Stephen	Y
Prince George's County - Council	Hon. Krystal Oriadha		Hon. Tom Dernoga	
Prince George's County - Council	Hon. Wala Blegay	Y		
City of Rockville	Hon. Monique Ashton	Y		
City of Takoma Park	Hon. Talisha Searcy		Hon. David Eubanks	
Maryland General Assembly	Hon. Brian Feldman			
Virginia				
City of Alexandria	Hon. Alyia Gaskins	Y	Hon. Sarah Bagley	
Arlington County	Hon. Takis Karantonis	Y		
City of Fairfax	Hon. Catherine Read	Y	Hon. Stacey Hardy-Chandler	
Fairfax County	Hon. Rodney Lusk	Y	Hon. Daniel Storck	
Fairfax County	Hon. Jeff McKay		Hon. Andres Jimenez	
Fairfax County	Hon. James Bierman	Y	Hon. Walter Alcorn	
City of Falls Church	Hon. David Snyder	Y	Hon. Marybeth Connelly	
Loudoun County	Hon. Laura TeKrony			
Loudoun County	Hon. Phyllis Randall		Hon. Koran Saines	
City of Manassas	Hon. Mark Wolfe	Y	Hon. Sonia Vasquez Luna	
City of Manassas Park	Hon. Darryl Moore	Y		
Prince William County	Hon. Deshundra Jefferson	Y	Hon. Kenny A. Boddye	
Prince William County	Hon. Andrea Bailey	Y	Hon. Tom Gordy	
Virginia General Assembly				

Y = voting member present
P = present alternate in addition to member
Total voting present: 26

AGENDA ITEM #6

ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS
November 2026

A. RESOLUTION APPROVING APPOINTMENTS OF MARYLAND AND VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS TO THE COG BOARD

The board will be asked to adopt Resolution R43-2026 approving appointments of two members of the Maryland General Assembly and two members of the Virgina General Assembly to serve on the COG Board of Directors. In October 2025, the board voted to add additional representation from the state general assemblies to serve on the board – one senator and one delegate from each state. These members will serve on the COG board for a two (2) year term. The nominated state representatives are as follows:

Maryland Senator Brian Feldman
Virginia Senator Saddam Azlan Salim
Maryland Delegate Andrea Fletcher Harrison
Virginia Delegate Charniele Herring

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Adopt Resolution R43-2026.

B. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING COG TO PROCURE AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT TO PURCHASE ALBERT NETWORK MONITORING SENSORS AND MS-ISAC MEMBERSHIPS FOR PARTICIPATING NCR JURISDICTIONS

The board will be asked to adopt Resolution R44-2026 authorizing the Executive Director, or his designee, to receive and expend $590,000.00 for cybersecurity investments for participating jurisdictions. As the Secretariat for the Urban Area Security Initiative for the National Capital Region, COG has been requested by the District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency to procure a contractor(s) and enter into a contract to purchase Albert network monitoring sensors and Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC) memberships for COG member jurisdictions that require them. The following goals will be accomplished through the contract: 1) MS-ISAC memberships will give participating jurisdictions access to vetted threat intelligence, prioritized mitigation guidance, and incident response resources; 2) Albert sensors will improve participating jurisdictions' ability to detect malicious activity on their networks; 3) The capability will support faster incident detection and response and strengthen regional information sharing; 4) The investment will reduce cybersecurity capability gaps between jurisdictions while improving regional coordination. Funding for this effort will be provided through a subgrant from the State Administrative Agent (SAA) for the National Capital Region. No COG matching funds are required.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Adopt Resolution R44-2026.

AGENDA ITEM #7

CAPITAL AREA FOOD BANK 2026 HUNGER REPORT

Hunger Report 2026: Food insecurity in the DMV hits a five-year high

By cafb <https://www.capitalareafoodbank.org//blog/author/cafb/> • September 15, 2026

REPORT IN BRIEF

Each year, the Capital Area produces a Hunger Report that explores the state of food insecurity across the Greater Washington, DC region.

The only report of its kind, the findings of this annual publication are the result of a general population survey conducted in partnership with the highly trusted independent social research organization NORC at the University of Chicago. Nearly 4,000 individuals were surveyed using designed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to measure food insecurity.

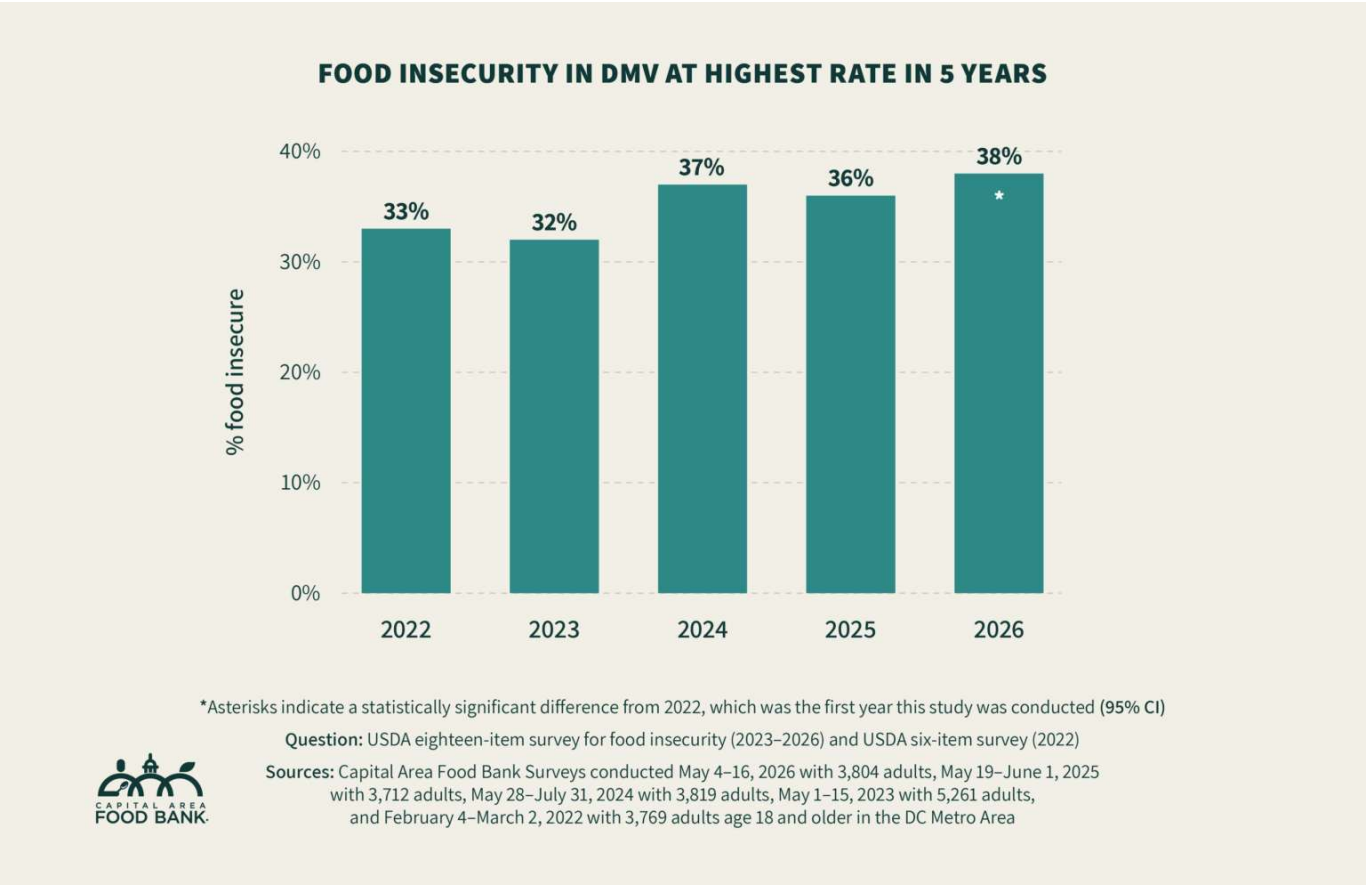
A summary of the 2026 report is below.

Food insecurity trends in Greater Washington

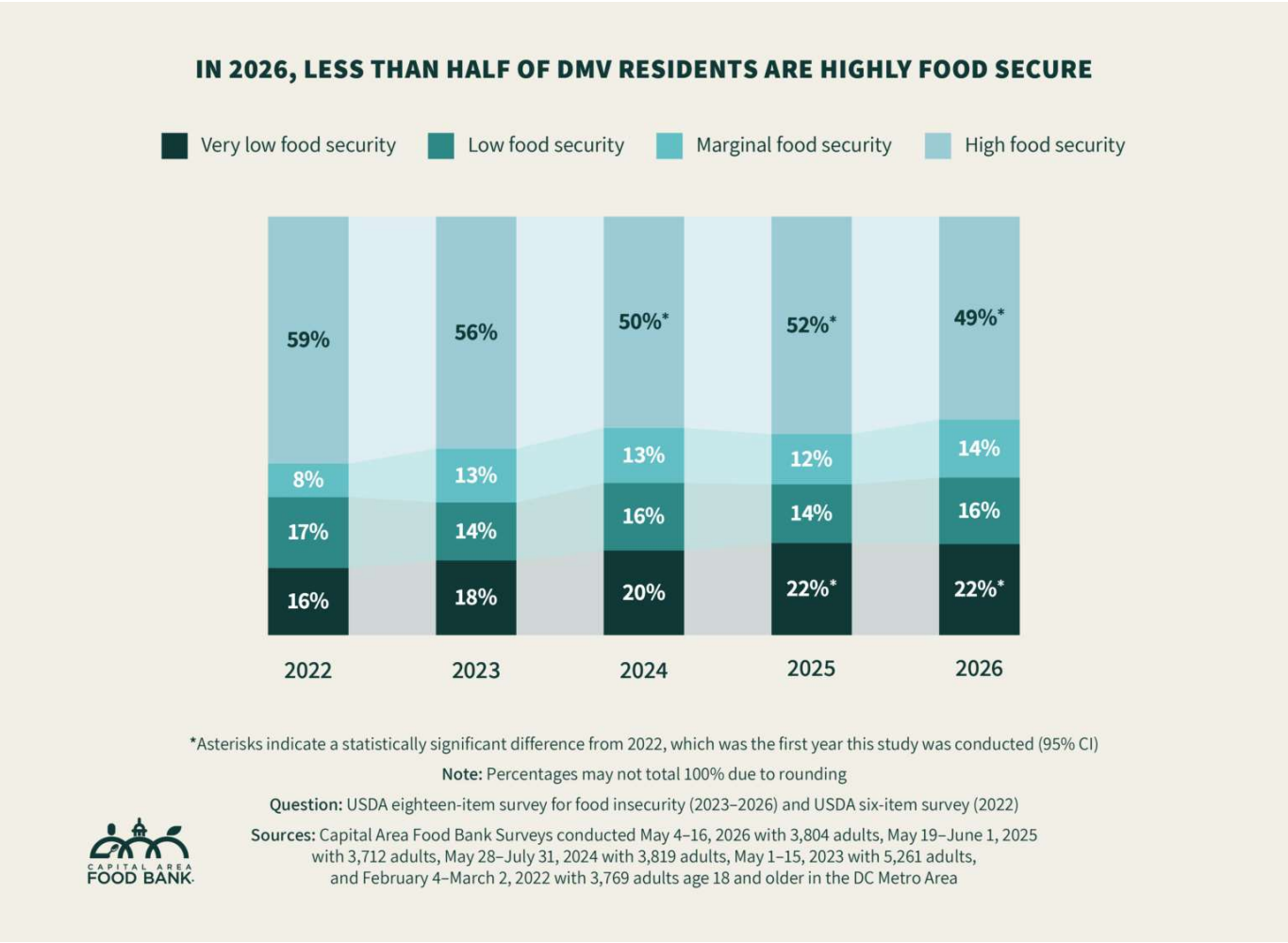
Food insecurity in the DMV hits a five-year high

The Greater Washington region is experiencing higher levels of hunger than seen near the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

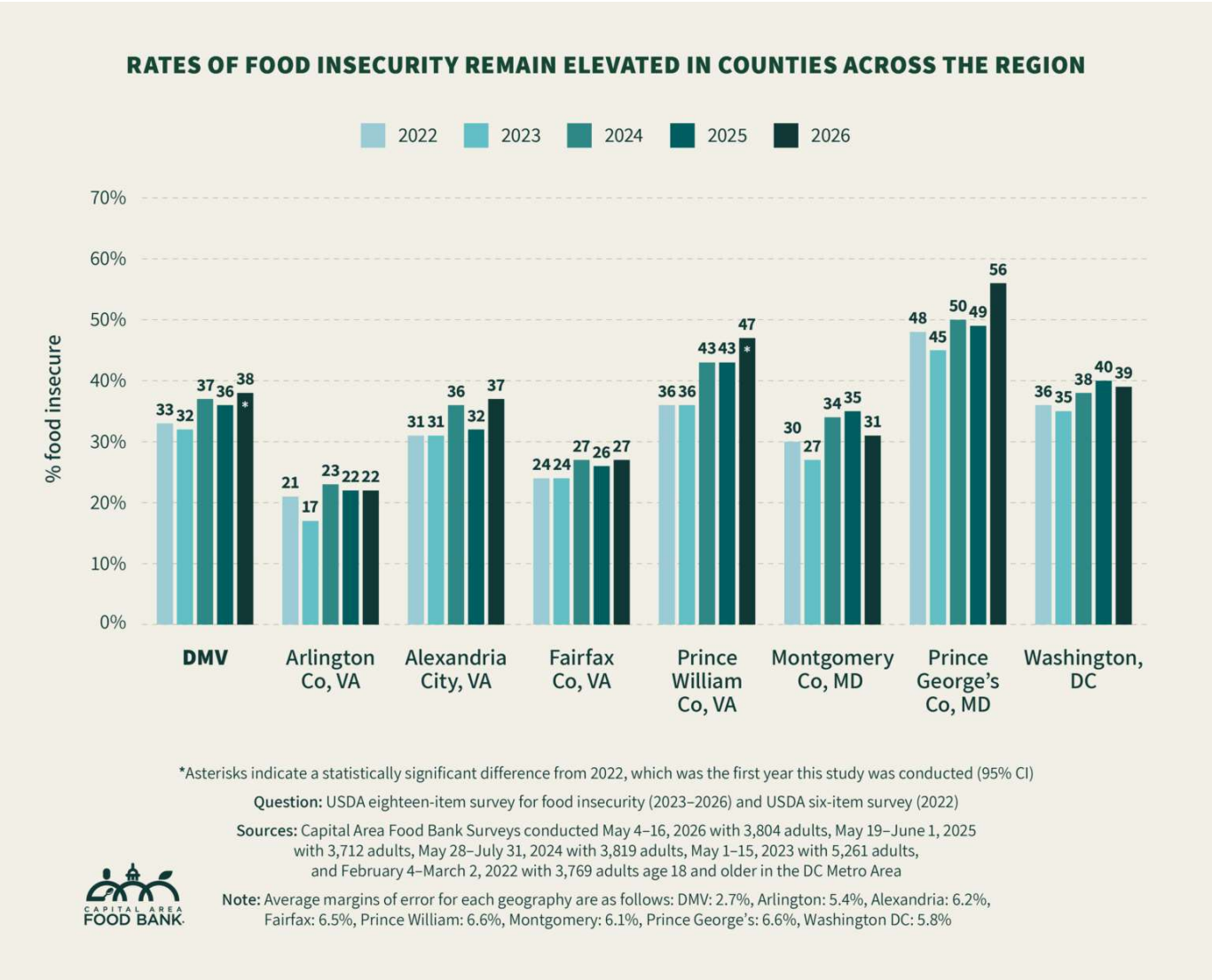
New data from the Capital Area Food Bank's latest Hunger Report found that food insecurity has reached a five-year high, with 38% of households in the region not always knowing where their next meal would come from.



Dramatic job losses, higher costs of living, and a record-setting federal government shutdown all contributed to deteriorating food security across the DMV. For the first time in the report's history, under half of households – 49% – were categorized as "highly food secure," a drop of 10 percentage points since 2022. That means a declining number of households feel highly confident in their ability to put enough food on the table.



In every county across the Greater Washington region last year, at least 1 in 5 households were food insecure, ranging from 22% in Arlington, Va., to 56% in Prince George's County, Md. The only county in the region to show a decline was Montgomery County, Md., where food insecurity dropped from 35% to 31%, though that change was within the survey's margin of error.

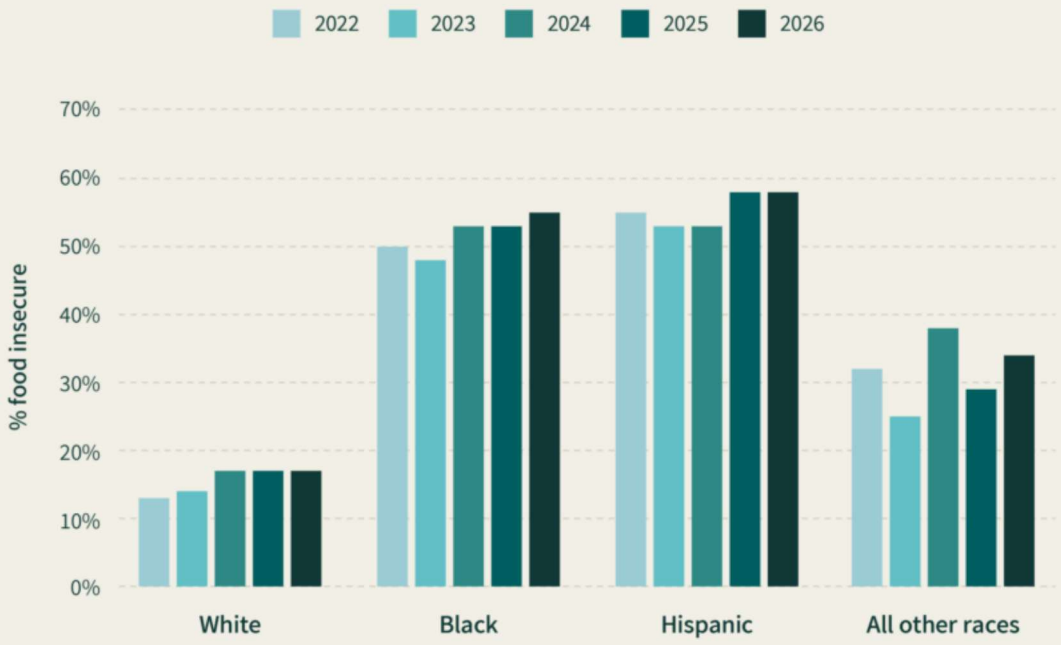


Food insecurity continues to disproportionately affect certain demographics:

> **Non-white households experience rates of food insecurity at rates two to three times higher than white households.**
>
> **Three out of five low-income households and one out of four middle-income households were food insecure.**

Households with children also face greater challenges: 34% of children in the DMV – 1 in 3 – lived in food insecure households in the last year.

FOOD INSECURITY DISPROPORTIONATELY AFFECTS PEOPLE OF COLOR IN THE DMV

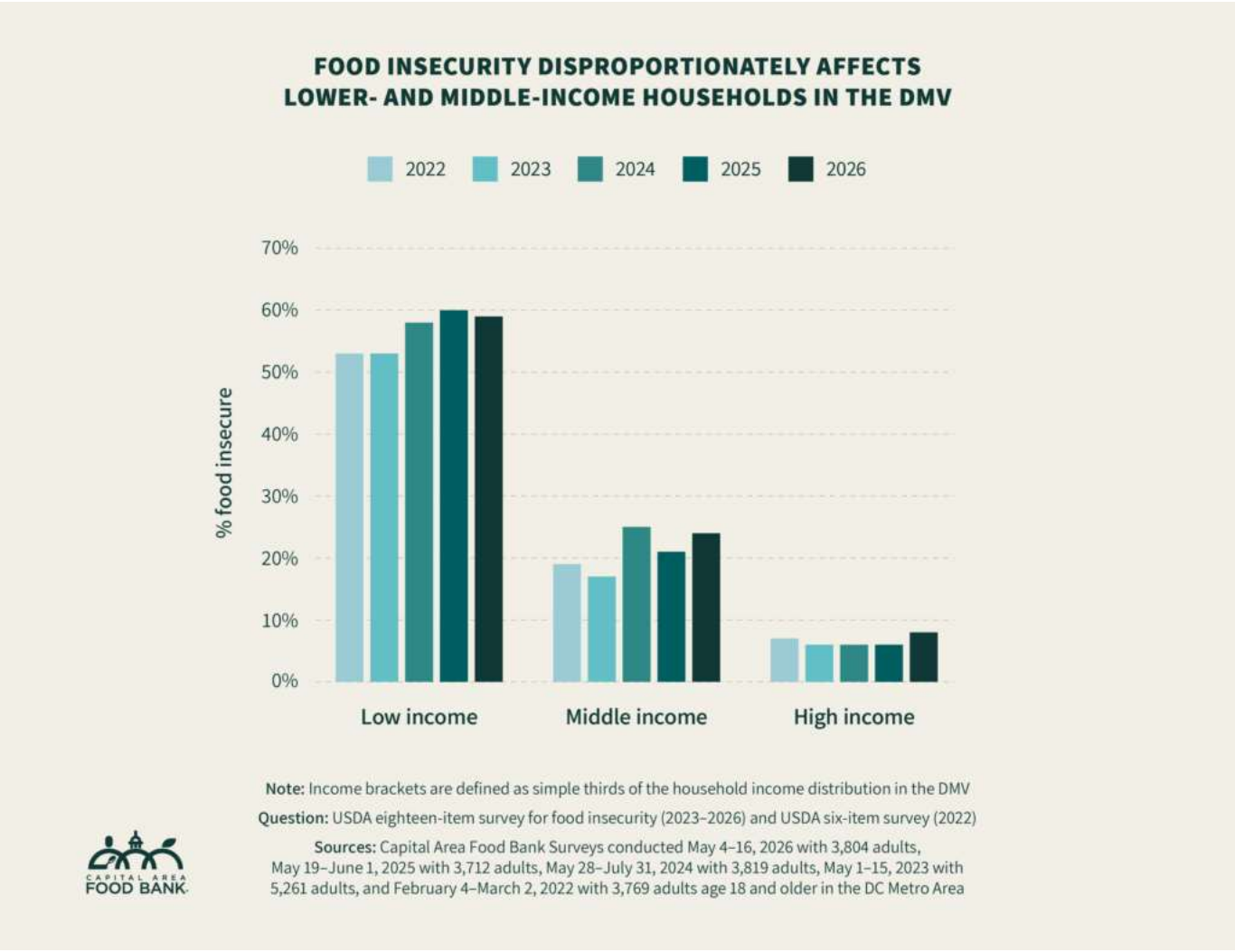


Question: USDA eighteen-item survey for food insecurity (2023–2026) and USDA six-item survey (2022)

Sources: Capital Area Food Bank Surveys conducted May 4–16, 2026 with 3,804 adults, May 19–June 1, 2025 with 3,712 adults, May 28–July 31, 2024 with 3,819 adults, May 1–15, 2023 with 5,261 adults, and February 4–March 2, 2022 with 3,769 adults age 18 and older in the DC Metro Area

Note: In 2022–2023, Hispanic identity was collected through a standalone question. In 2024–2026, the survey used a combined race and ethnicity question, eliminating the separate Hispanic identity item. To maintain comparability over time, respondents were classified as Hispanic if they selected the Hispanic response option, whether selected alone or in combination with any other race or ethnicity category

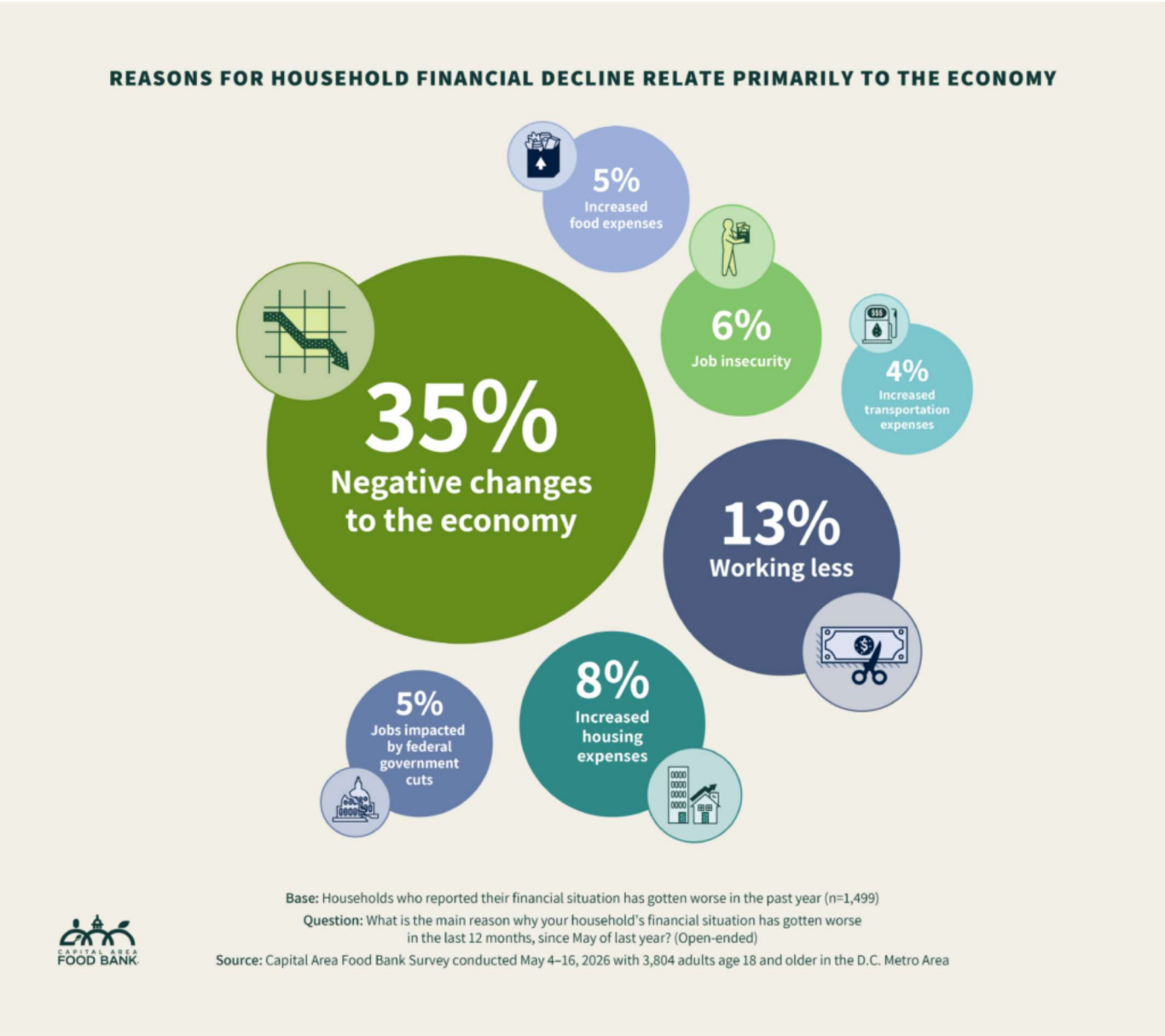
CAPITAL AREA FOOD BANK



Major drivers of food insecurity

When households are faced with financial instability, food budgets are often one of the first things to shrink.

A challenging job market, high cost of living, and slow wage growth are causing more DMV households to feel an increased strain on their finances. Among respondents, 44% reported that their finances have gotten worse in the last year, up from 35% in 2022. More than one-third cited negative changes in the economy as a key reason for that financial decline.

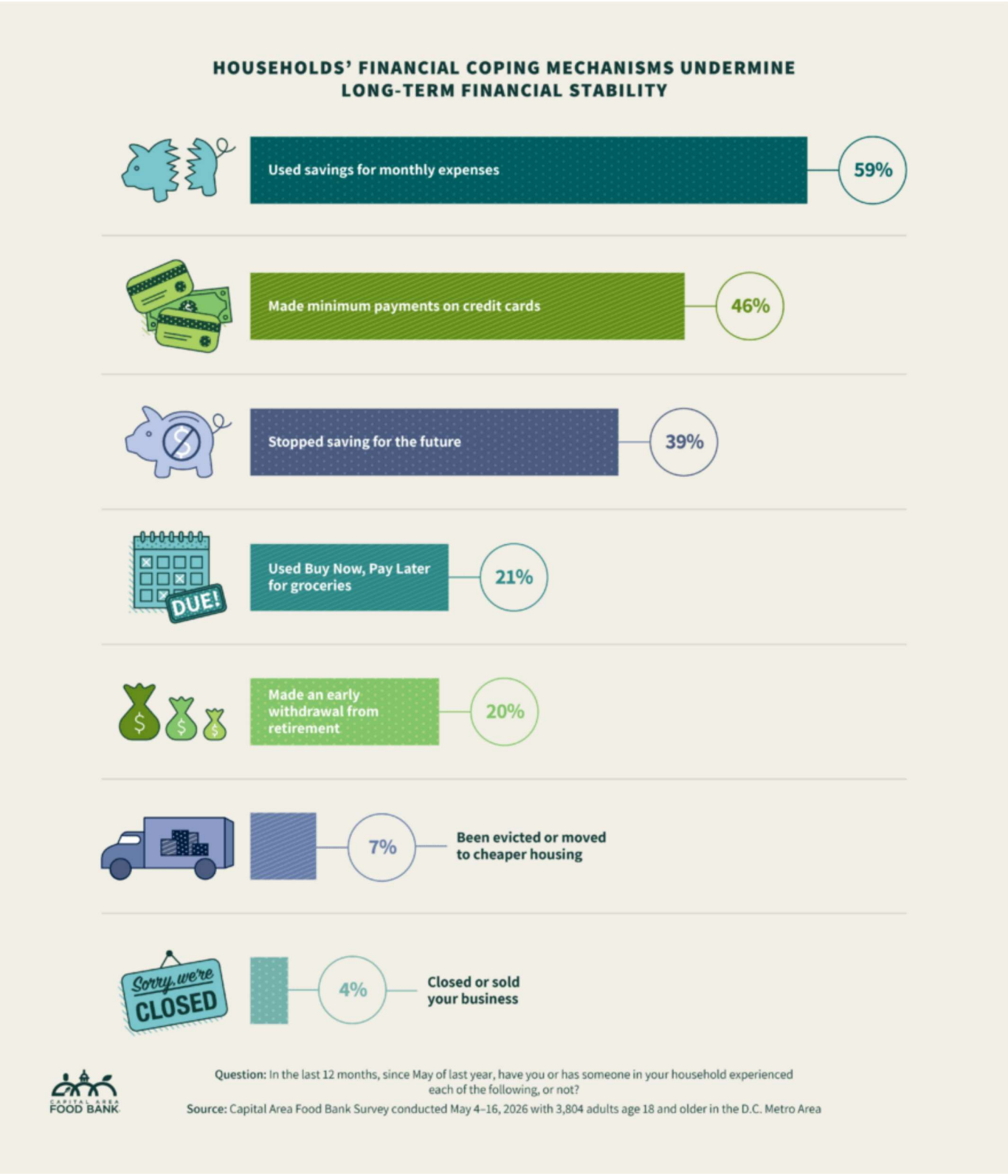


For DMV residents, finances grew tighter as the region faced the most dramatic job losses of any metro area in the country: 100,000 jobs were eliminated between January 2025 and January 2026. Many of these job losses were a result of the reductions in the federal workforce.

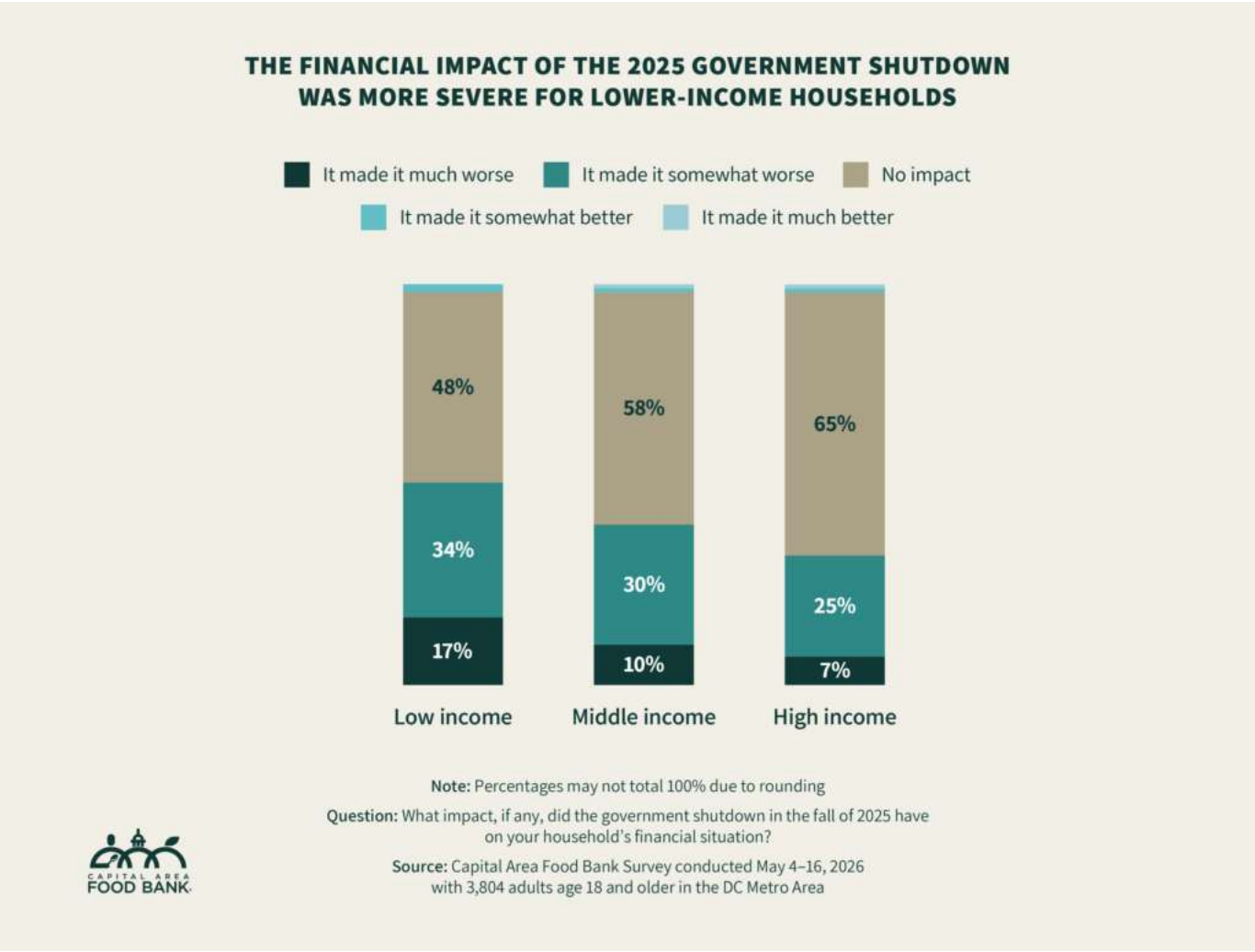
The consequences of the federal job losses continue to have ripple effects for residents:

44% of those who have found reemployment receive a lower salary

Even for those who are employed, putting food on the table remains a challenge amongst a skyrocketing cost of living. With high food costs, spikes in gasoline prices, and wage growth that has lagged inflation, families are cutting back and making difficult .



On top of these broader economic pressures, the region endured a 43-day federal government shutdown in October and November 2025. Disrupted paychecks and uncertainty around lost wages placed even greater strain on household finances, leaving more people vulnerable to food insecurity. Nearly half the population reported it worsened their financial situation, with lower-income households more likely to report negative effects from the .



Factors poised to compound existing need

As food insecurity hits a five-year high, changes to the social safety net further threaten the stability of the region.

House Resolution 1 (H.R.1) contains legislation that makes unprecedented changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):

$187 billion in cuts to the program over 10 years

Removal of SNAP access for refugees and asylum seekers

Time limitations for accessing the program placed on new groups – including adults up to age 64 (formerly 54), parents of children 14+ (formerly 18+),

homeless individuals, veterans, and young adults aging out of foster care – who do not meet certain work or volunteering requirements or qualify for other exemptions

Caps on benefit increases

Elimination of SNAP-ed

Increased administrative costs for states

States to pay for a portion of benefits

Even a partial loss of benefits stands to significantly impact those who turn to SNAP to help feed their households:

56% of SNAP recipients reported that their financial situation got worse over the last 12 months

71% are using savings to pay monthly bills

61% are making minimum payments on credit cards

53% have stopped saving for retirement or other future expenses

A diminished social safety net and mounting economic pressure are driving more people to the charitable food network: 28% of DMV residents access charitable food.
At the same time, fewer foreign-born individuals are seeking assistance. Fear of immigration enforcement and other safety concerns are keeping individuals from accessing aid for themselves and their families. Among the Capital Area Food Bank's network of partners, 29% reported an increase in the number of individuals who accessed food via a proxy rather than attending a food distribution themselves.

Recommendations

Mitigate the impacts of changes to SNAP
Federal changes to SNAP mean that states will be responsible for covering a greater share of the cost of food security programs and ensuring that those who seek assistance meet certain requirements. By continuing to invest in food

security programs, reducing administrative barriers, and strengthening partnerships to help residents navigate new requirements to qualify for benefits, state and local governments can help their residents continue to get the food they need. Governments should also focus on ensuring children do not face disruptions in food access as household circumstances change by strengthening school meal programs and child nutrition initiatives.

Coordinate services across the charitable sector

Food insecurity doesn't exist in isolation. As public benefits are reduced and more people turn to the charitable sector for help, organizations must work together to strengthen connections across services. Along with expanding their own capacity, nonprofits, healthcare providers, community institutions, and others should establish a connected system that makes support easier to find and navigate for the households that need it most.

Invest in basic need support to strengthen economic mobility

As noted in previous Hunger Reports, addressing food insecurity requires more than ensuring people have enough food today. People experiencing food insecurity are actively seeking opportunities for greater economic mobility, yet the need to afford basic necessities can take priority over long-term advancement. Investing in wraparound services that support those immediate needs allows individuals to focus on their education and career growth. In turn, this creates a new pool of talent ready to enter the workforce and strengthen the regional economy.

Scale Food Is Medicine work

Individuals experiencing food insecurity who cannot access healthy food and balanced meals are more likely to develop diet-related diseases, leading to higher medical costs and poorer health outcomes. The Food Is Medicine (FIM) movement is grounded in the principle of prescribing and providing nutritious food as a healthcare intervention. Developing sustainable funding pathways and investing in the infrastructure needed to deliver these interventions at scale will help make nutrition a regular component of healthcare and improve population health.

AGENDA ITEM #8

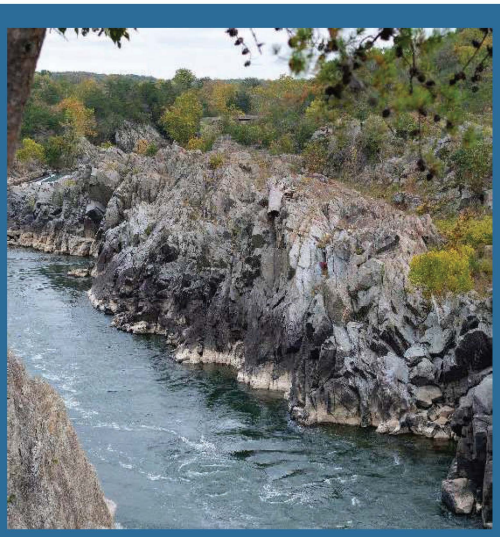
2027 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FACILITATED DISCUSSION

*2027 COG Legislative Priorities Document has not been finalized. Below is the 2026 document.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Supporting the region's goals for world-class transit, roadway safety, affordable housing, environmental protection, and more.

January 2026









Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES
Adopted by the COG Board of Directors on January 14, 2026.

ABOUT COG
The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is an independent, nonprofit association that brings area leaders together to address major regional issues in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia. COG's membership is comprised of 300 elected officials from 24 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and U.S. Congress.

CREDITS
COG 2026 Legislative Committee
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Photo Credits: Metro train (WMATA); Bike Lane (BeyondDC/Flickr)

ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY
Alternative formats of this document are available upon request. Visit www.mwcog.org/accommodations or call (202) 962-3300 or (202) 962-3213 (TDD).

TITLE VI NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY
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TRANSPORTATION FUNDING, PLANNING, & CONNECTIVITY

Support DMV*Moves* Initiative's Funding Recommendations for Metro and Local Transit

DMV*Moves* is a joint-initiative by COG and Metro to develop a shared vision for the future of the region's transit network and identify sustainable, long-term, dedicated funding sources to support it. The DMV*Moves* Plan, endorsed by the COG and Metro Boards, calls for ongoing capital investments in Metro, addressing the unmet funding needs of commuter rail and local/commuter bus systems, and other actions to improve transit service delivery and inter-jurisdictional coordination to make the regional transit system function more like an integrated and seamless network. Given the critical role a safe, reliable and efficient transit system is for the region and the economy of Maryland and Virginia overall, it is a top priority for state and local leaders to advance the necessary legislation and budget actions to:

- Commit an additional $460M a year that grows 3 percent annually and is dedicated for Metro's capital needs.
- Support state, regional and local actions necessary to provide for the operating and capital needs of the commuter rail and local bus systems.
- Support commuter rail and local/commuter bus systems to improve transit service delivery and inter-jurisdictional connection and coordination to make the regional transit system function more like an integrated and seamless network.

Support Indexed Federal Funding for the Region's Metro System

The Metro system is the centerpiece of the metropolitan Washington transportation system and forms the backbone of its economy. Almost half of all federal employees use the Metrorail and bus system to commute to work. The federal government should act to permanently provide a larger share of both operating and capital funding for the Metro system, which its employees and the region depend on. Specifically, support making the federal government's annual appropriations for the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) permanent and index the funding amount to a sustainable and predictable level.

Support Fixing the Deficit in the Federal Highway Trust Fund

For more than two decades the federal Highway Trust Fund (HTF) revenue has been insufficient to fund the congressionally authorized surface transportation program. These shortfalls have been closed with transfers from general fund and other short-term measures, including in the reauthorization for federal transportation spending through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The Congressional Budget Office projects that the balance in both the highway and transit accounts of the Highway Trust Fund will be exhausted in 2028. Support addressing this structural deficit and systemic imbalance of the HTF revenues as a top priority to provide certainty of federal funding for the surface transportation program and ensure that any fix to the HTF revenue structure retains all the programs included in the 2021 IIJA and fully funds them at levels authorized or previously envisioned.

Support Roadway & Pedestrian Safety

Safety on our roadways and for our pedestrians and bicyclists continues to be a priority for our region. Data for 2024 shows that roadway fatalities remain elevated compared to pre-pandemic levels and the region has yet to meet many of its annual highway safety targets. Although jurisdictions in the region have employed strategies related to the "E's" of safety (engineering, education, enforcement, emergency medical services, and equity) to address this challenge, enhanced safety laws are needed to combat this crisis. Regional ticket reciprocity between Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia would improve the ability to hold drivers accountable for their actions across state lines. Enabling localities broader flexibility in the implementation of automated traffic cameras (i.e., in more locations beyond school and work zones) would also help to improve roadway safety as it is a proven countermeasure. And the growing prevalence of e-devices such as scooters and e-bikes demands new approaches such as e-device registration to allow for their enforcement, as well as the need to change crash reporting forms to include a category that tracks e-device involved-crashes. In addition, because impaired driving remains a top contributing factor to crashes in the region, there is always interest in advancing legislation to deter it.

WATER QUALITY PROTECTION

Support Investments in Water Infrastructure & Water Quality Protection

Support appropriating the full authorized funding levels for water, wastewater, stormwater, and water reuse programs, including the Clean Water and Drinking Water SRFs, the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program, the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA), Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA) and for state programs including grants for local governments and water utilities, and stormwater local assistance funds. Specifically, continued support for the Washington Metropolitan Area Backup Water Supply Feasibility Study. COG supports funding state revolving funds (SRFs) at the maximum authorization in federal law and making sure that funding for congressionally directed spending projects is in addition to the authorized SRF funding levels. Ensure that local water infrastructure investments to meet water quality permit load allocations and handle future population and economic growth are protected, specifically in the implementation of the revised Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement. Invest in workforce training and development to ensure the availability of skilled workers to fill water sector jobs. Support funding for agricultural conservation programs.

Support Climate & Resiliency Initiatives

Support funding and policy to address robust scientific climate change analysis, adaptation and resiliency planning and coordinated local best practices for flood control, drought, and water storage and reuse. Support drinking water security and resiliency through research, planning, programs and funding to ensure a resilient, reliable, and clean drinking water supply for the region.

Ensure Regulatory Feasibility & Flexibility

Support actions that provide for flexible implementation and a feasible pace for future stormwater, water, and wastewater permits and other regulatory requirements, including reasonable reporting requirements. Support cost-effective scheduling and financing of water quality programs including streamlining permits, flexibility to achieve nutrient and sediment reduction across wastewater, stormwater, and other sectors to protect affordability of water. For PFAS regulation, COG supports policies that enforce the "polluter pays" principle for PFAS cleanup, ensuring those responsible for contamination are held accountable. In addition, COG supports an explicit legislative exemption from liability under CERCLA (Superfund) for water and wastewater systems, which are passive receivers of these pollutants.

Ensure Local Government Input

Ensure that local governments and wastewater and drinking water utilities are given opportunities to provide timely and meaningful input on the implementation of the revised Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, as well as legislation and management decisions affecting the Chesapeake Bay and local water quality. Encourage regional collaboration on updates to land-use policies around waterways and riverways.

CLIMATE RESILIENCY & AIR QUALITY PROTECTION

Support Policies to Meet the Region's Climate Goals

Expand policies, programs, and funding at federal, state, and local levels to help meet the region's medium- and long-term objectives in climate change mitigation. Ensure that local governments are recognized and given opportunities to provide timely and meaningful input on climate and clean energy policies and programs.

Support Accelerated Multi-Sector Actions to Reduce Greenhouse Gases and Criteria Pollutants

The region and its member jurisdictions are committed to addressing the adverse impacts of climate change including reducing the amount of harmful greenhouse gases (GHG) released in the atmosphere. Support accelerated actions across all sectors to help meet the region's 2030 climate and energy goals. Support engagement and continued funding at all levels of government to monitor the impacts of climate investment programs and GHG performance measures. Emphasize priority investments in Equity Emphasis Areas.

Ensure Sustainable Secure Energy Access for All

Advocate for state and federal actions to enhance access to secure, affordable clean energy. Prioritize and protect funding for energy-sector infrastructure to improve affordability, resilience and reliability. Support policies, funding, and incentives for energy efficiency and security improvements such as microgrids, district energy systems, and clean energy storage technology. Prioritize funding for upgrading energy infrastructure to withstand extreme weather events and to protect investments in grid technologies that improve energy efficiency and system performance. Encourage coordination among state regulators, regional transmission organizations, utilities, and local governments to accelerate transmission and distribution upgrades that reduce congestion, improve reliability, address affordability, and advance climate and equity goals. Emphasize the need for deployment and workforce development in low-income, energy-burdened, and vulnerable communities to ensure a just and equitable climate future for all.

Support Solar Deployment and Aggressive State Renewable Portfolio Standards

State requirements for a clean grid and aggressive Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) and support for local efforts to deploy distributed solar on government facilities and in the community at scale are effective methods of increasing the amount of renewable electricity generated within a grid system driving greater deployment of renewable energy projects to meet the region's 2030 solar goals. Protect existing and advocate for more aggressive policies, including state RPS and other innovative policies and programs, business models, and funding opportunities that support meeting the RPS, such as supporting a strong Renewable Energy Credit (REC) market, solar carve-outs in RPS policies, Power Purchasing Agreements (PPAs), reasonable solar interconnection standards, offshore wind, community choice aggregation, and community solar opportunities for energy-burdened households.

Expand Clean Energy Innovation, Technology & Finance

Encourage and support responsible deployment of next-generation, zero- and low-carbon energy resources that can provide firm, flexible capacity to complement variable renewable generation and

support a reliable, decarbonized grid. Expand options for and improve access to clean energy finance at the state and local levels, including advocating for further investment in and deployment of capital through green banks. Foster cost effective and efficient market frameworks, reasonable regulatory frameworks, business model innovation incentives and partnerships that expand the adoption of energy efficient and zero energy building codes, building benchmarking, clean energy technologies and infrastructure, and low or zero-emission vehicles. Support policies and incentives to encourage the growth of technology manufacturing and sector workforce development in our region.

Support Aggressive Energy Efficiency Goals

Support state and local energy efficiency programs to reduce energy usage, costs, and associated greenhouse gas emissions in response to rapidly changing federal energy and climate policies. Advocate for aggressive initiatives to target households with high energy burdens. Prioritize support and incentives for weatherization, deep energy retrofits, building electrification and retro-commissioning programs to achieve the highest possible energy performance and preferably zero energy buildings within Equity Emphasis Areas and climate vulnerable communities of concern. Support policies and programs to address energy demand growth from high electricity use sectors such as data centers.

Enhance Incentives & Financing Mechanisms for Climate Resiliency

Support legislation, incentives, financing, and funding mechanisms to support deployment of grey blue, and green infrastructure resilient to extreme heat, flooding, and other climate hazards. Priority resilient infrastructure initiatives include the establishment of resilience hubs in climate vulnerable communities, improving the resilience of critical infrastructure (transportation, communication, energy and water system assets), equitably addressing urban heat island, enhance green infrastructure networks, providing for tree planting and preservation on privately owned lands, and implementing measures to reduce flood risk in climate vulnerable communities, such as restoring wetlands and enhancing green infrastructure to augment and improve stormwater management.

Support Policies that Preserve & Protect Regional Air Quality and Public Health

Support strong policies, regulations, and funding necessary to preserve improvements in air quality and strengthen the region's ability to meet current and future air quality standards that are protective of public health and welfare. Advocate for federal policies that support measures to mitigate the effects of wildfire risks on regional air quality. Consider environmental justice when implementing air quality policies, programs, and initiatives. Support local members' efforts to identify and implement initiatives to reduce air pollution and protect residents that live in areas with unhealthy levels of air pollution. Support regulatory actions to monitor and reduce air pollution transport into the region. Communicate with regional leaders and the public about improvements in air quality and the need for actions to reduce emissions and continue to meet air quality standards.

HOUSING AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES

Support Efforts to Equitably Increase the Supply of Housing & Promote Housing Affordability

Support legislation and programs (such as the ROAD to Housing Act and Neighborhood Homes Investment Act) to preserve and increase the supply of housing and housing choices to address the full spectrum of need in our region. Ensure that a sufficient supply of housing is preserved and produced as outlined in COG's 2030 Regional Housing Initiative targets. Support increasing the supply of a diverse range of housing unit types, sizes and price points that are affordable (both rental and homeownership) for our residents in the region's identified Activity Centers and Equity Emphasis Areas. Support efforts to eliminate barriers to the production of fair and affordable housing by encouraging new financing tools (for builders and buyers), streamlining development processes, and creating innovative regulatory reforms, such as adaptive re-use of commercial space, that results in the production of a greater variety of housing types and eliminate exclusionary zoning practices. Support legislation, policies, and practices that increase access to opportunity, reverse patterns of residential segregation, and create inclusive communities in concert with efforts to increase supply overall.

Strengthen Systems to Prevent & End the Experience of Homelessness

Support coordinated regional efforts to ensure that the experience of homelessness is rare, brief, and nonrecurring. Strengthen the capacity of local homeless services systems, including Continuums of Care, to engage in long-term, strategic planning aimed at reducing homelessness and improving system performance over time. Advocate for federal actions and resources that sustain core homelessness programs and services that promote long-term housing stability, including, case management, behavioral health care, diversion, housing navigation, and other essential wrap-around supports. Expand the production and preservation of deeply affordable and supportive housing to meet regional needs and help residents maintain stable, independent living. Maintain strong federal, state, and local investments in rental assistance, eviction prevention, and legal aid for tenants, landlords, and moderate-income homeowners. Improve alignment between housing and health funding streams so that residents with complex needs can access appropriate care, treatment, and ongoing supports that reinforce long-term stability.

Support Alignment of Workforce Development & Job Creation

Support legislation to focus on workforce development and job creation at the local level, and efforts to develop industry standard credentialing and skills programs for sectors outside of the federal government. Support legislation and programs that fund local job development, career and technical education, and overall, more closely align education and job creation.

Support Local Governments & Activity Centers

Work with local governments to support sound land use planning which focuses on employer retention and new job growth in the region's mixed-use Activity Centers.

HOMELAND SECURITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Support Funding for Public Health Response

Support funding for public health to prevent, prepare for, and respond to public health emergencies and pandemics. Leverage new and existing funding mechanisms that would provide resources to carry out public health surveillance, reporting, infection control, vaccine distribution, laboratory testing, mass care, planning and exercises, communications and other public health activities. Invest in an adequate workforce capacity and capability to support public health infrastructure. Enact and support the development of more secure supply chain networks, with a focus on vulnerable populations, as it relates to personal protective equipment (PPE) and other life safety equipment used in the response of pandemics.

Support Cybersecurity Preparedness Initiatives

Support cybersecurity programs and initiatives that advance and improve cyber preparedness and response to current and emerging threats. Work with local and state partners to develop resiliency against future cybersecurity attacks and other virtual threats targeted at our citizens and the information technology infrastructure of our communities.

Support Regional Emergency Preparedness

Continue to support emergency response preparedness programs that advance and improve response preparedness to existing and emerging threats. Work with local and state partners to maximize the region's share of federal grant funds and use these funds to promote value added outcomes that continue to increase capacity, capability, and developed standards for regional response in the National Capital Region.

Increase Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Funding

The National Capital Region (NCR) receives UASI funding for efforts to address the multi-discipline planning, organization, equipment, training, and exercise needs of high-threat, high-density urban areas, and to assist in building and sustaining capabilities to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from threats or acts of terrorism using the whole community approach. As funding allocations are assessed, policy makers should recognize the complexity of challenges in the NCR that directly impact Federal government operations and security and support an increase in UASI funding to our region to effectively address the unique nexus of U.S. Federal, state, local, and international operations.

Support Resources for Violent Crime Reduction

Provide resources at the local, state and federal level to support the development, implementation and evaluation of strategies to prevent, intervene in, and respond to violent crime. Specifically, gun violence and the associated trauma inflicted on communities. Continue to provide Department of Justice grant funding to support violent crime reduction efforts at the local level.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Support Efforts to Combat Substance Use Disorders

Work with local, state, and federal partners to increase resources to combat substance use disorders for all ages throughout the region which may include improving access to treatment and recovery services, promoting prevention education, reducing the stigma of drug disorders, supporting research on pain management, protecting harm reduction strategies, and ensuring awareness of overdose-reversing drugs.

Support Health Equity and Health Disparity Reduction

Support ongoing system reform that advances health equity and reduces health disparities, especially in maternal health outcomes. Health equity is the goal that every person is equally able to live a healthy life regardless of their background or circumstances. Health disparities are preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health that are experienced by socially disadvantaged racial, ethnic, and other population groups and communities. Ensure timely access to care for the health of all residents and the reduction of disparities in maternal morbidity and mortality by enacting policies that will assist counties in improving maternal health outcomes.

Increase Availability of and Access to Mental Health Services

Work with local, state, and federal partners to increase access to and availability of mental and behavioral health services, especially for youth, throughout the region. Include psychiatric hospital beds, counseling, telehealth, and other outpatient services; support culturally competent providers from diverse backgrounds; develop communication strategies to combat mental health stigma and promote mental wellness throughout communities. Continue expansion of crisis intervention, mental health courts, and diversion programs, where treatment is indicated rather than incarceration, especially for at-risk youth; and re-entry programs to reduce recidivism rates of mental health consumers.

Promote Family Preservation and Avoid Family Separation Due to Citizenship Status

Work with local partners to prioritize efforts that prevent family separation due to deportation or citizenship status. Advocate for policies that safeguard families of varying citizenship status by promoting alternatives to family separation and ensuring their placement within supportive family or community settings when separation is unavoidable. Emphasize strategies to strengthen family preservation services. Collaborate with child welfare systems to maximize funding and resources to address the increased caseload resulting from family separations, ensuring children have access to critical support services and stable placements during these challenging transitions.

Increase Recruitment and Support for Foster Children and Resource Parents

Support initiatives to address the critical shortage of resource parents by enhancing recruitment efforts and providing adequate support and resources to retain them. This includes offering targeted community outreach efforts to raise awareness of the need for foster families. Increase recruitment tools by promoting collaboration among jurisdictions to share events, resources, and best practices that effectively engage potential resource parents.

FOOD SECURITY & HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS

Defend and Strengthen Programs to Reduce Childhood Poverty and Support Nutrition & Health

Protect and expand access to free school meals for all students. Strengthen and simplify programs such as Summer EBT and Summer Meals and deploy or strengthen policies like the Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit that reduce childhood poverty and food insecurity. Enhance farm-to-school and provide healthier food and drink options for children wherever meals are served or sold.

Improve Food Security & Healthy Food Access

Increase food and flexible cash assistance to residents in need, including children and their families, college students, adults, seniors, and veterans. Support efforts to reverse recent changes to SNAP that increase administrative burdens to applicants and administrators, reduce current and future benefit amounts, restrict eligibility, and shift program costs to states. Support any allied initiatives to undo negative Medicaid changes which will have cascading detrimental consequences to the availability of free school meals. Invest in reducing SNAP error rates, modernizing programs, protecting participants from fraud, and replacing stolen funds. Advocate for revenue policies (i.e., extreme wealth tax) to address gaps in federal food assistance and poverty reduction programs. Support innovative initiatives for food insecure residents not eligible for federal programs. Address disparities in food security and healthy food access among communities of color. Support culturally responsive policies and practices that protect the dignity and safety of food assistance recipients from immigrant communities. Promote SNAP acceptance among small/ local vendors. Invest in programs that improve access to local and regional healthy food, including access on college campuses, at food banks and pantries, farmers markets and CSAs, food hubs, grocery, point-of-choice initiatives, and through food as medicine initiatives.

Support Small Farmers & Food System Resilience

Institutionalize and fund programs like Local Food for Schools/Childcare and Local Food Purchase Agreement Programs. Address land loss issues such as Heirs Property and support farmland preservation, healthy soils, land access strategies and programs, and transition to the next generation of small farmers. Center the unique experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) in legislative proposals, and policy and program development to facilitate greater access to land ownership, capital, and markets. Increase resources and improve policies that promote values-based group purchasing and institutional procurement initiatives from the region's farms. Streamline benefit program payments for farmers and promote use of public lands for community food production. Recognize indigenous food security priorities and rights.

Support Local Food Entrepreneurs, Businesses, & Workforce Development

Strengthen entrepreneurialism, cooperative development, and workforce development programs in the regional food economy which will result in increased employment opportunities with living wages. Target investments to address inequities faced by communities of color. Create career pipelines and improve health and safety for food/agriculture workers. Invest in regional food production and distribution infrastructure to support small businesses including subsidized regional commercial kitchen space.

AGENDA ITEM #9

OTHER BUSINESS

AGENDA ITEM #10

ADJOURN