

# Long Island



# Cares<sup>INC</sup>

**The Harry Chapin Food Bank**

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## **PACHTER ADDRESSES GOVERNOR'S ECONOMIC SECURITY COUNCIL ON THE NEEDS OF THE HUNGRY ON LONG ISLAND**

Paule T. Pachter, Executive Director of Long Island Cares, Inc., The Harry Chapin Food Bank was one of the early speakers to address New York Governor David Paterson's Economic Security Cabinet at a public hearing on Wednesday, July 30<sup>th</sup> at Farmingdale State College. The Governor's Economic Security Cabinet has been receiving testimony and comments from the public during an aggressive statewide tour aimed at soliciting feedback on the Governor's priorities.

Mr. Pachter spoke about the growing problem of hunger on Long Island as a result of both the national and statewide recession. "Our member agencies which total more than 560 food pantries, soup kitchens and other community based programs are reporting an increase of between 25-30 percent in the number of new families experiencing hunger in one of the more affluent regions of the state," said Pachter. According to Pachter, "Too many families with children, senior citizens and those less fortunate are turning to anti-hunger programs for assistance as a result of the high cost of fuel, food and housing on Long Island, and New York State must insure that the process for applying for such programs as food stamps, health benefits and foreclosure assistance is simplified."

Guiding the Cabinet's work has been the Governor's commitment to working families including establishing new initiatives to provide easy access to the full range of benefits and tax credits that the state and federal governments provide and creating a workforce development system to support the needs of lower-wage workers and their employers through better coordination and alignment with the education and economic development sectors. The text of Mr. Pachter's statement to the N.Y.S. Economic Security Forum follows.

**Statement By**  
**Paule T. Pachter, A.C.S.W., L.M.S.W.**  
**Executive Director**  
**Long Island Cares, Inc., The Harry Chapin Food Bank**

**To**

**New York State Economic Security Forum**  
**Wednesday, July 30, 2008**  
**Farmingdale State College, Farmingdale, New York**

“Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to address the members of the panel as you explore strengthening New York State’s economic security. As the Executive Director of Long Island’s only food bank and a lead organization in addressing the issue of hunger on Long Island, I am keenly aware of the needs of children, adults, and senior citizens who are under-nourished and those that are among the more than 260,000 Long Islanders that are hungry and rely upon the services of our network of more than 560 community based organizations including food pantries, soup kitchens, senior centers, day care centers and other charitable organizations.

“The poor national economy, which according to most experts is clearly in a recession, has been impacting the quality of life for many families on Long Island. While our network of community based agencies have historically provided support to individuals and families living at or below the national poverty level, there are a growing number of families whose incomes exceed the poverty level by 20-50 thousand dollars who are turning to pantries and soup kitchens on Long Island for assistance in obtaining nutritious foods including meats, poultry and such staples as milk and eggs. Many Long Islanders are struggling as a result of the continued increase in the cost of fuel to heat their homes, gas to power their cars, the increase in the average market basket for food, and the failures within the mortgage lending industry, which has resulted in more than 40,000 homes on Long Island being in foreclosure.

“Long Islanders are making difficult choices in reaction to the poor economy, and many of these families who may earn between \$45 and \$70,000 annually are turning to our network of food pantries, and other charitable organizations for assistance. Some can’t afford meat or poultry, others can’t afford fruits and vegetables, and we all can’t afford to move forward without greater collaboration and support between food banks, anti-hunger organizations and our state leaders. Feeding the hungry on Long Island takes creativity, determination,

resources and the type of passion and commitment that was displayed 27 years ago by singer, songwriter and activist, Harry Chapin, when he founded the organization that now bears his name.

“Long Island Cares and our network of food banks across New York State are committed to working together and to reaching out to create greater alliances with local food manufacturers, farmers, and food distributors to ensure that the needs of the more than 260,000 hungry children and families on Long Island are met with nutritional meals, access to entitlement programs, and passion. But we cannot accomplish this task alone, especially when it is estimated that 15% of the nation’s population is relying on the services of hunger relief organizations such as Long Island Cares.

“It is critical that state government work in partnership with their network of food banks, food rescue organizations and anti-hunger advocates to provide adequate funding and resources to meet the needs of our residents. We must be able to secure nutritional food grown and produced locally, as well as having these products delivered at a reasonable cost. There must be a renewed commitment towards feeding the hungry in New York State that embraces enhanced funding, access to resources, aggressive community outreach and education by which no child, adult, senior citizen or person in need is left out. Harry Chapin once said; *‘To know is to care. To care is to act. To act is to make a difference.’* The current economic climate in our country requires us to act and to make a difference. Thank you.”

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Long Island Cares, The Harry Chapin Food Bank is a leading anti-hunger organization and the only food bank on Long Island. Long Island Cares brings together all available resources for the benefit of the hungry on Long Island and provides emergency food where and when it is needed, sponsors programs that seek to heighten public awareness about the issue of hunger on Long Island, and provide skills to foster self-sufficiency among the population that benefits from their services. The organization was founded in 1980 by the late singer/activist Harry Chapin in response to the immediate needs of hungry Long Islanders. It is continued today by his wife and partner Sandy Chapin, a dedicated Board of Directors and talented staff working out of their 35,000 square foot complex in Hauppauge.

If you would like to volunteer to assist in the sorting of food donations, or to learn more about Long Island Cares, The Harry Chapin Food Bank call (631) 582-FOOD or log onto [www.licares.org](http://www.licares.org).