



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF  
**ADAM J. BELLO**  
MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**For immediate release:**  
**October 13, 2022**

**MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO KICKS OFF AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) ANNOUNCEMENTS WITH PROPOSED FUNDS TO FOODLINK**

*\$1.4 Million to expand food access for Monroe County families in Gates, Greece and Irondequoit*

**Monroe County, NY** – Monroe County Executive Adam Bello joined Congressman Joe Morelle, Foodlink, and other community partners today to announce \$1.4 million in proposed funding awarded to Foodlink to expand food access for Monroe County families. Foodlink's proposal is one of almost 40 projects selected as part of Bring Monroe Back, Monroe County's plan that will utilize federal funds received through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Through the efforts of Congressman Joseph D. Morelle, and Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, Monroe County is the recipient of \$144,080,127 in local fiscal recovery funds.

"The wellness and vitality of our community requires every person to have access to healthy and nutritious food, regardless of age or geographic location," **said County Executive Bello**. "During the height of the pandemic, we saw families across Monroe County impacted by food insecurity. Even today, we see both city and suburban food pantries and food cupboards struggling to meet increased demand. Partnering with Foodlink will allow us to reach more people in need."

Foodlink's proposal addresses two significant drawbacks in Federal Nutrition Programs (FNPs) which currently limits geographies and sets age limits. Currently, FNPs outside the City of Rochester must meet strict income qualifications and only pays for meals for children (5-18) or seniors. The current guidelines exclude multi-generational programs — a barrier to serve the growing need in towns like Gates, Greece and Irondequoit.

This proposal allows Foodlink to serve quality, nutritious meals to multi-generational families throughout Monroe County via innovative community programs such as Foodlink's "meal delivery truck," which provides meals to underserved neighborhoods and to anyone in need. The program was piloted in targeted city neighborhoods during the last two summers. With ARPA support from Monroe County, the program will expand into high need areas in various towns as well as serve meals for multi-generational families at the Lewis Street YMCA Neighborhood Center in Rochester and Open Door Mission's Coldwater House in Gates.

"Foodlink is an extraordinary community resource that is helping to ensure children and families have access to the reliable, healthy meals they deserve," **said Congressman Joe Morelle**. "I'm proud to have secured this funding through the American Rescue Plan that will allow Foodlink to expand their reach and provide more meals to more families. I'm grateful to County Executive Bello for prioritizing this critical initiative and for his continued work to utilize ARPA investments in a way that uplifts our community and builds a brighter future for everyone who calls Monroe County home."

“Foodlink provides an invaluable service to Monroe County residents, working diligently to address food insecurity across the region,” **said Senator Schumer**. “I worked hard to secure these American Rescue Plan Act funds for local governments, and I applaud County Executive Bello for allocating these funds to Foodlink to ensure families all across Monroe County have access to healthy, filling meals.”

“Ensuring residents have access to nutritious food is critical to the health and wellness of our communities. Foodlink has a track record of providing healthy meals to families across Monroe County,” **said Senator Gillibrand**. “I fought to secure these critical American Rescue Plan funds for local governments, because I know our communities know best how to invest these funds.”

“American Rescue Plan Act funding will allow our community kitchen to expand our services and reach new community members,” **said Julia Tedesco, Foodlink President & CEO**. “We are grateful for this opportunity granted to us by Monroe County to serve quality food through models that historically were not eligible to participate in federal nutrition programs. We look forward to serving more multi-generational programs like Coldwater House, and we hope this initiative will serve as a model for the evolution of federal nutrition programs.”

#### **About the Bring Monroe Back ARPA initiative:**

Under County Executive Bello’s Bring Monroe Back recovery initiative, the Department of Planning conducted a community-wide survey, held numerous public meetings and heard testimony from community organizations to determine community funding priorities. The plan is now before the Monroe County Legislature for consideration and approval. Selected programs align with one or more of County Executive Bello’s four pillars for Monroe County’s future: Public Health and Wellness, Public Safety, Economic and Workforce Development, and Infrastructure.

Pending approval by the County Legislature, Monroe County will enter into a contract with Foodlink that will commence on or about Jan. 1, 2023.

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