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**Hunger Action Day  
May 12, 2003**

Thirty-six Fresno County residents went to Sacramento to talk to their legislators about hunger and programs to help feed hungry neighbors in Fresno and in California.

Following the visits, participants were asked what they liked, what they wished, and what they learned.

**Khou Yang Cha:** I appreciate meeting important people. I am very happy. I hope everything that we talked about is going to work. I hope they understand us and what we need. I saw the leader, the tall person face to face at the Capital. I heard: 'Who is your Governor?' Now I know who the governor is in Sacramento.

Yes, I go hungry. In the past the rent was affordable, now the rent goes up, and I have no money left for food. Every month I wait for my check. It all goes for rent and utilities. I need money for soap to wash clothes and dishes, shampoo. I have no money left for rice.  
I am angry.

The check (SSI) is only in my name—but it all goes to others for rent and utilities, none for me. I have no salt for my food. I am not well. I have asthma, and must be on oxygen.

I go to church. God is with me. Someday god will help us meet our dream.

I tell you the truth. I have never lied.

**Youa Vang:** I wish that AB231 will pass. The leader we spoke to, who answered questions, had good answers. In the afternoon we met Senator Poochigian. There were three important people I met today. I hope they do something for us.

Outside (at the rally) leaders spoke really well and they support AB231. That is good for us.

They asked: What do you need? I am a single mom. Sometimes my kids have no food to eat. I am going to cry right now. We are people in the world. Poor people. I thought we were the only poor people. I want the leaders to pass AB231 because I need Food Stamps to support my family. Two of my four children get Food Stamps. I am on SSI. It is not enough to feed everyone.

**Kia Xiong:** I was happy to see the Capital. I feel sorry that we didn't meet the important person, only his staff. There was too short of a time to talk to them. I need a lot of things. I cannot talk because my tears are going out. In my heart are all the problems. My life problems are 99% of my heart.

I get \$750 every month on SSI. My rent is \$660. I don't have money to buy clothes. I have no money for food.

I have made you a story cloth.

**Song (Xiong) Yang:** I was a single. My husband passed away. I have lots to tell you, in the future. Lots of people need a Senior site for food (at the Center for New Americans where we already go).

**Lee Yang:** I don't speak English. I don't understand what all they say today. I hope today will work and help my children and my parents. I am going hungry. I wish our coming to the Capital will help. I appreciate your taking us to the State Capital.

**Mao Vang:** I don't know what to say. I don't speak English. I don't understand what they say. You have taken us to see the State Capital. I hope in the future that they are going to do something for us. My husband was a soldier for the CIA and was killed. I wish in the future the AB231 will pass.

**Soua Lee:** In the past in Laos I was a soldier. I supported the CIA soldiers. When I came here to the USA, I was very happy. In 2000, I went to Washington DC. This is my first time to the State Capital. I am very happy.

I want to tell the legislature staff that I wish my children will get a higher education. I am a US Citizen. In the future, I will support the USA, what they want.

I need more time to learn English. I need more time. The Center has cut the funding for learning English.

**Mai Chue Lee:** I have been in the USA 23 years. This is the first time I have visited the State Capital. Thank you for giving time to take us.

My husband passed away 5 years ago. I wasn't going to come on this trip, but my children said: "Mommy, you have to go and learn a new thing."

I am happy to see things I have never seen before.

I am a single mom and I need help to support many kids.

My 18 year old is looking for a job. No one will hire her. I still have five kids at home.

**Khou Vue:** I am a single mom. All my children are grown up. Each month I cash my check. After 3 or 4 days, all the money is gone, and I have no money to buy food. I don't know if they (the legislators) will help us today. I am not a healthy person. I need help.

I am happy to meet you. You look like my older sister. I am looking for help from you. When I lived in my Country, they were killing us in our village. People were hungry and hiding and running. I thought that if I come to this country, USA...I hoped. I wanted to change my life and work. I appreciate the SSI, but it only covers my rent and utilities. I don't have enough to support my children.

You and April, in the future want to help.

I would like to vote this year. I have lots to tell you, my life history would take three or four days.

**Neng Lee:** I wish today/ I hope AB231 will pass. What I need: Food Stamps for the elderly. I am not healthy, and need to support my family. I have \$750 per month and there is no money left for my children for food. I want to work closely on this. If I were healthy, I would work to get more money to support my children. I am disabled (leg).

There is too little money. I need more Food Stamps and cash for my three children. I wish you and April to help us in the future.

**Cha Vue:** I am a mental person. We went today to the Capital, and I saw a lot of things. I am a single mom. Everything is inside my heart, I can't talk. I have no place to live right now. I live with my daughter. It is not easy to live with them, but the rent is too high for my SSI check. I want to suicide. I don't know the language.

I have so little money; it is a difficult life to live with them. My Daughter has three kids, 10, 12, 13 years old. This month they are cutting all cash to her family. All her money goes to rent, and no money is left for food for all of us. My Daughter got a job working for \$1,000 a month, so they cut her CalWorks.

**Lia Lee:** I live by myself, I have never married. I am very old (70). I have no one to take care of me. My cousin used to take care of me, now he never comes. I have lost everything. I need Valley Caregivers to pay for my niece to take care of me.

I feel so sorry. I am always walking. I had surgery. I can't cook, I can't lift.

I am happy and appreciate you and April to take me to the State Capital.

**Houa Lee:** I'm very happy, today is the first time I see State Capitol. I'm happy to see persons working at the Capitol and appreciate the way they are working hard and support us.

My husband and I don't know how to drive. I hope the leaders will support us like the way they said. I need help from top leaders. I apply for California Alien Card two times. My husband and six children are citizens. I am afraid they will send me back to my country. If they do, I would commit suicide. I'm afraid after 9/11 the government is changing laws and afraid I will be sent back. I am very upset. I wish I could have gotten my green card.

April can help. I appreciate April – Leader. Edie is your leader. I hope work will get done by April and Edie as leaders. I want to be a citizen.

**Pang Yang:** I thank you for the knowledge and power you have. I have a lot of stress in my family. Today I tell top persons what we need. I hope all will pass to help us.

My husband and children have become US Citizens. My older son applied for a green card, but he did not hear from INS. My son is looking for a job and needs green card. I can't drive. My children have to walk. I was worried, and hope all that we talked about today will be done.

We are on my SSI only. Rent is \$480 a month. When lights, rent, and car insurance are paid all the money is gone. I have seven children.

I am happy to see and meet the top person. This is a good move for us. I hope they are willing to support us. I am happy about people like April and Edie, they are important people to me. With six kids on Food Stamps, we get \$350. I still wait for April to contact the Food Bank for vegetables and food.

**Ka Yeng Vue:** I am happy to see legislators and staff. I am glad they will help me support our causes. I learned that going in a big group makes a difference. I am a widow with no kids to help me. I am old, poor and have medical problems. I need more help. I am happy to tell the legislator my story. Next year I hope today's issues will pass.

**La Vang:** I liked the chance to meet legislators and to see their offices and know that they are working. I think it is up to you if you want anything changed. I am confident that they will help people in Fresno.

**May Moua:** I am happy that Phoua, April and Edie took me to Sacramento to meet and speak with all the legislators. I am happy to see Marla's video group (Mazon). I liked being able to go to Cruz Bustamante's office.

**Ngia Ge Yang:** Today was an important day. I got to talk about our situation with legislators. I hope they will increase cash aid and Food Stamps for seniors. I am confident if people tell their stories and talk about their situation it will help. I hope that you will follow up to help.

**May Yang:** I am happy. It felt like the sun was always shining. I hope that God has opened the hearts of the legislators. It is hard for me to buy a bag of rice. Thank you, to April, Phoua and Edie for speaking out on our behalf.

**Kia Her Vue:** I am happy to see all the legislators and the beautiful Capitol building.

**Yeng Lor:** I am happy to meet the legislators and see their offices. I am confident about the work they are doing since I see what is going on. They will be helpful.

**Chu Houa Xiong:** I am happy to be able to go meet the legislators.

**Chloe :** I liked the food and water on the bus. I got to see all the legislators. I would like to speak to the legislators themselves, not just their staff.

**David Casey:** I liked the impact the Hmong culture had on legislators, and the feisty nature of the Hmong people. I wish to return to Sacramento with other cultures involved.

**Willie Frutos:** I liked the company. I wish the prop 231 will pass.

**Ruben V.:** I wish for AB 231 to pass.

**Holly Porter:** I liked the diversity of the group and having clients tell their stories. I wish to meet with actual representatives rather than staff.

**Michelle Clark:** I liked being able to speak with the legislative members and getting to see the capitol. I wish AB231 will pass. It will help many people throughout our State. I wish we had more translators.