



## Hidalgo County Commissioners Court

**Richard F. Cortez**  
*County Judge*

**David L. Fuentes**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 1*

**Eduardo "Eddie" Cantu**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 2*

**Joe M. Flores**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 3*

**Ellie Torres**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 4*

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## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Texas Hunger Initiative creates local task force to battle hunger

**EDINBURG** – Commissioners Court tasked Community Service Agency Executive Director Jaime Longoria with developing a plan to ensure that no county resident, from children to adults, goes to bed hungry because they are not aware of assistance available to them.

The county will work in partnership with Baylor University's Texas Hunger Initiative, other community agencies, schools, and faith-based organizations, Longoria said.

Texas Hunger Initiative Executive Director Jeremy Everett reported that Supplemental Nutrition Assistance payments in Hidalgo County have dropped over the past three years, leaving money on the table that could have helped residents purchase food for their families.

Judge Richard F. Cortez questioned the cause of people going hungry when there are funds available to assist them.

"We want to know where we are **today** in terms of food poverty and where we can improve," said Cortez. "I ask this so that we can respond to your needs as well."

Everett said one of the main reasons is that people don't know that there are programs available to assist them and to work with agencies, organizations, and schools to identify those families.

"The Boys and Girls Club offers free after-school meals to our school children; we'd like to thank them for that," said Precinct 2 Commissioner Eduardo "Eddie" Cantu.

Precinct 1 Commissioner David L. Fuentes also recognized the free meal programs offered by school districts.

"Yes, all of those are wonderful resources," said Everett. "Our job is to continue finding avenues to feed those in need."

In addition to helping county residents, SNAP also helps the local economy because those funds are spent locally.

"The Program is responsible for one in 10 jobs in local grocery stores both in Hidalgo County and in the country," Everett said.

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**Photo Caption:** Baylor University's Texas Hunger Initiative representatives Elaine Hernandez and Jeremy Everett.

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*Hidalgo County is home to one of the fastest growing regions in the nation. We provide health and justice to the over 800,000 residents of our county. We strive to be accessible and responsive to our citizens by providing excellent public service through the values of leadership, transparency, fairness, collaboration, respect and fiscal responsibility.*