

Food Insecurity Among Children: A Look at Prevalence, Programming, and Initiatives in Baltimore City

PaHua Cha

Baltimore City Health Department

Emerson National Hunger Fellow, CHC

Introduction

- Emerson Nation Hunger Fellowship,
Congressional Hunger Center



- A few facts about me:
 - Graduated from Stanford University with a degree in Human biology, focus in Global Development & Health
 - Daughter of refugees



http://www.nytimes.com/imagepages/2009/12/28/world/28iht-hmong2_337-span.html

Why is it important?

- Vulnerability of children
- Economic Impact
 - Academic performance
 - Job readiness



- Health impact on children and parents
 - Development risks
 - Obesity
 - Depression

Alaimo, et al. 2002

Casey, et. al. 2001

Frongillo, et. al. 2005

Methodology

- Interviews with different service-providers, academic institutions, and community stakeholders
- Data collection on programs
- Academic literature review
- Food insecurity surveys in schools

Purpose

- Try to capture prevalence of food insecurity among children in Baltimore
- Create a complete “picture” of services for children and their families
- Complete a literature review of food insecurity among children

Prevalence: U.S.

- The food insecurity rate for all U.S. households is 14.7%

VS.

- The food insecurity rate for all U.S. households with children is 21%.
- 10.7% of food insecure households with children report reduced quantity and quality of food for their children

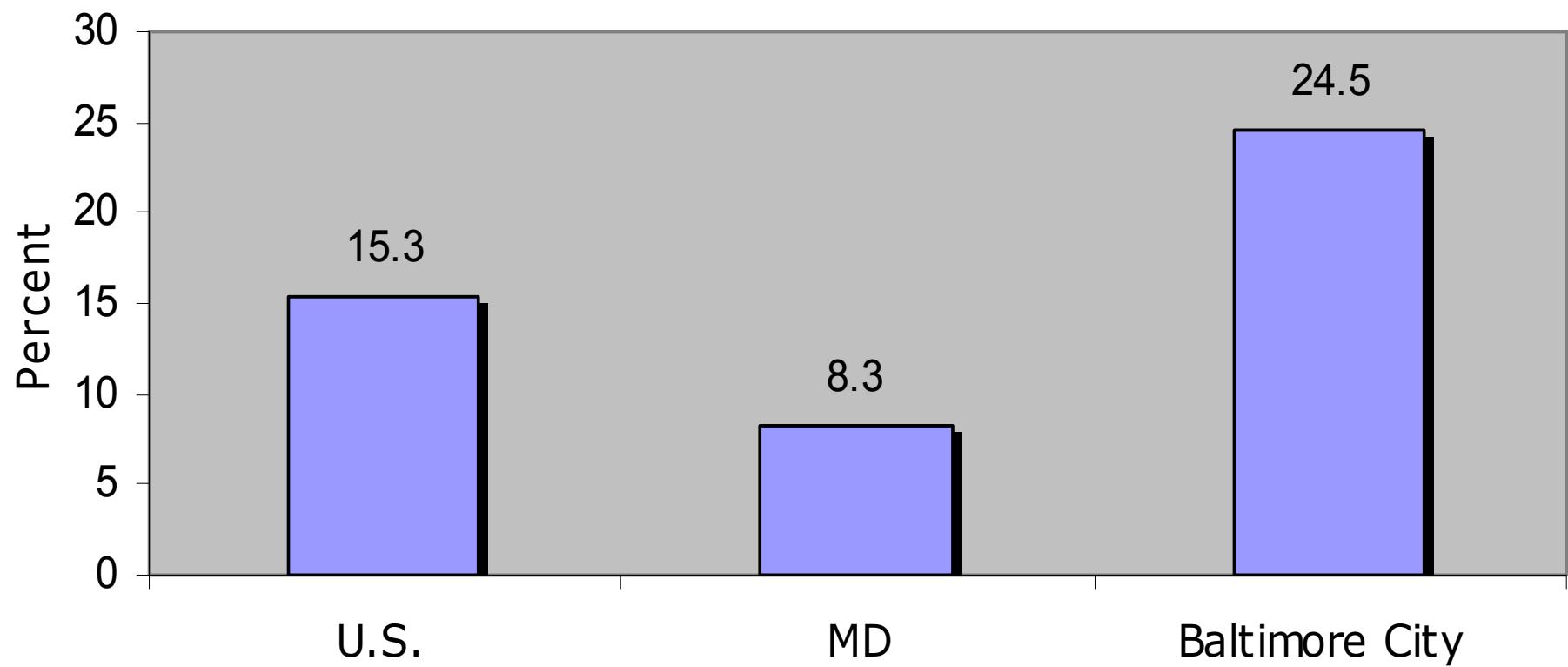
Prevalence: Maryland

- 11.1% of households in Maryland are food insecure
- 4.3% of households in Maryland are categorized with very low food insecurity

Prevalence: Baltimore City

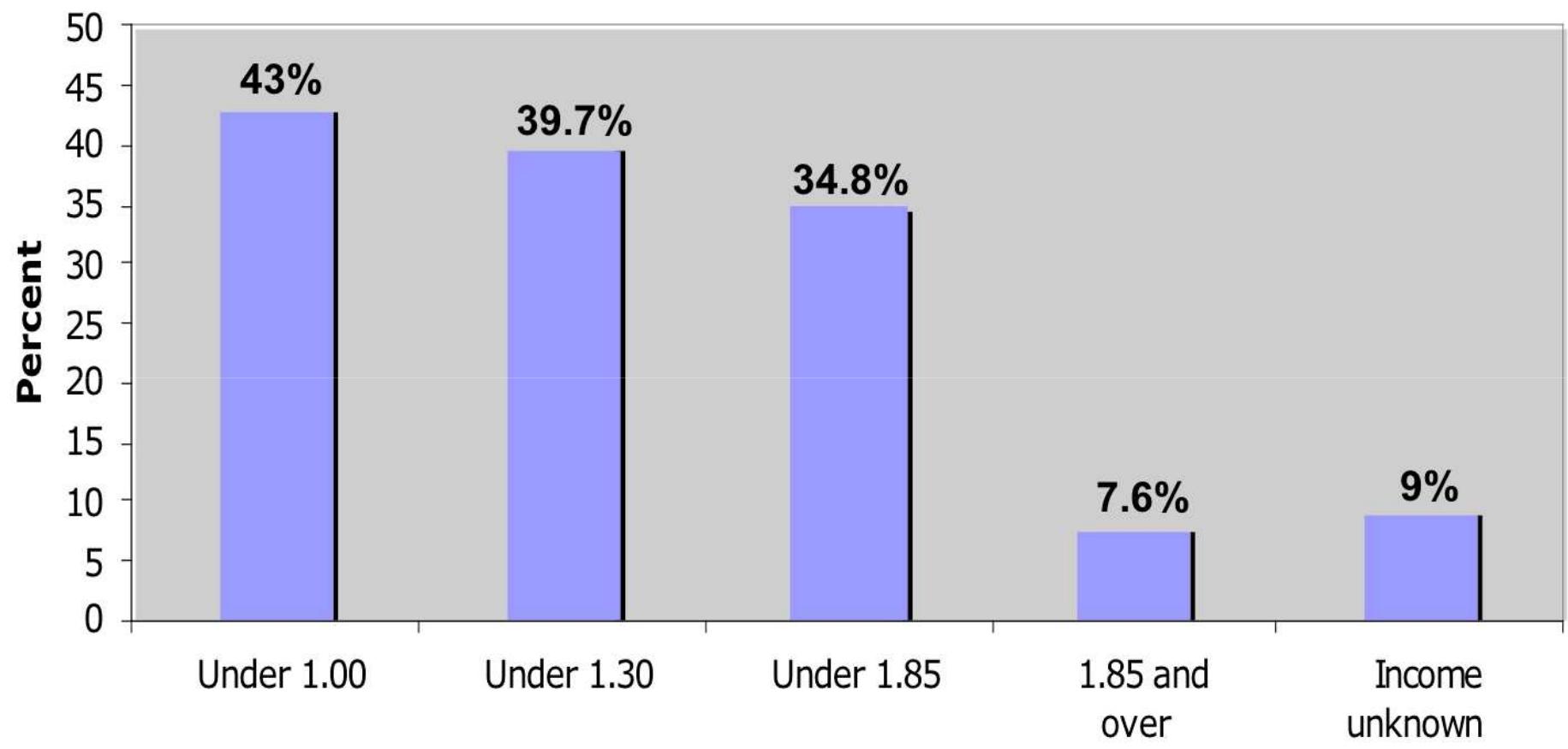
- University of Maryland:
13.5% of low-income families with children in Baltimore were food insecure.
- The Baltimore City Health Department's Community Healthy Survey (2009):
23% of respondents reported being concerned about not having enough food in past 30 days

Percent of households with children living below the poverty level



*Data for graph from the American Community Survey

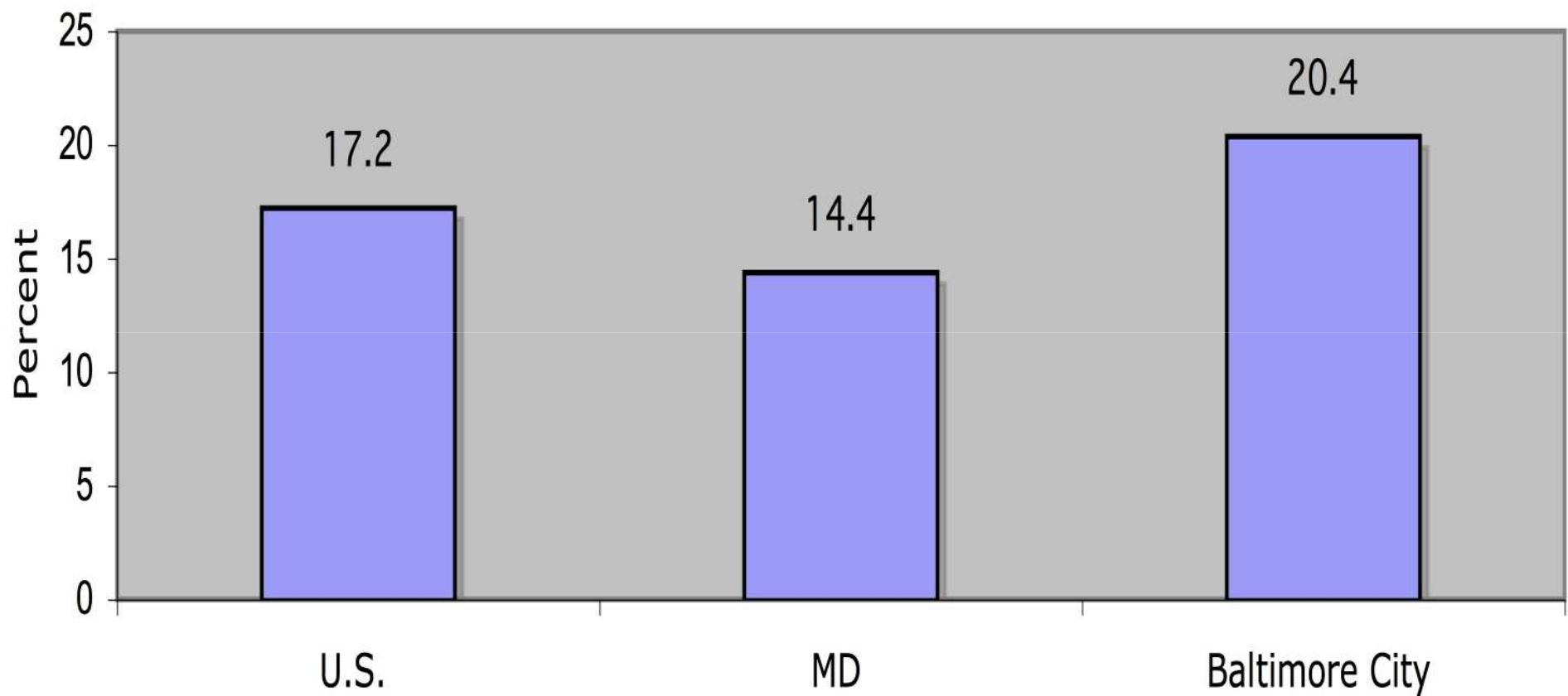
Percent of Food Insecure Households by Income Level



*Data from USDA (2009)

Household Income-to-Poverty Ratio

Percent of 18 to 24 year olds with less than a high school diploma



*Data for graph from the American Community Survey

Services & Programs for Children

School-based Program

- Food and Nutrition Education
- School Breakfast Program
- National School Lunch Program
- Child & Adult Care Food Program
- Summer Food Service Program
- School back-pack program



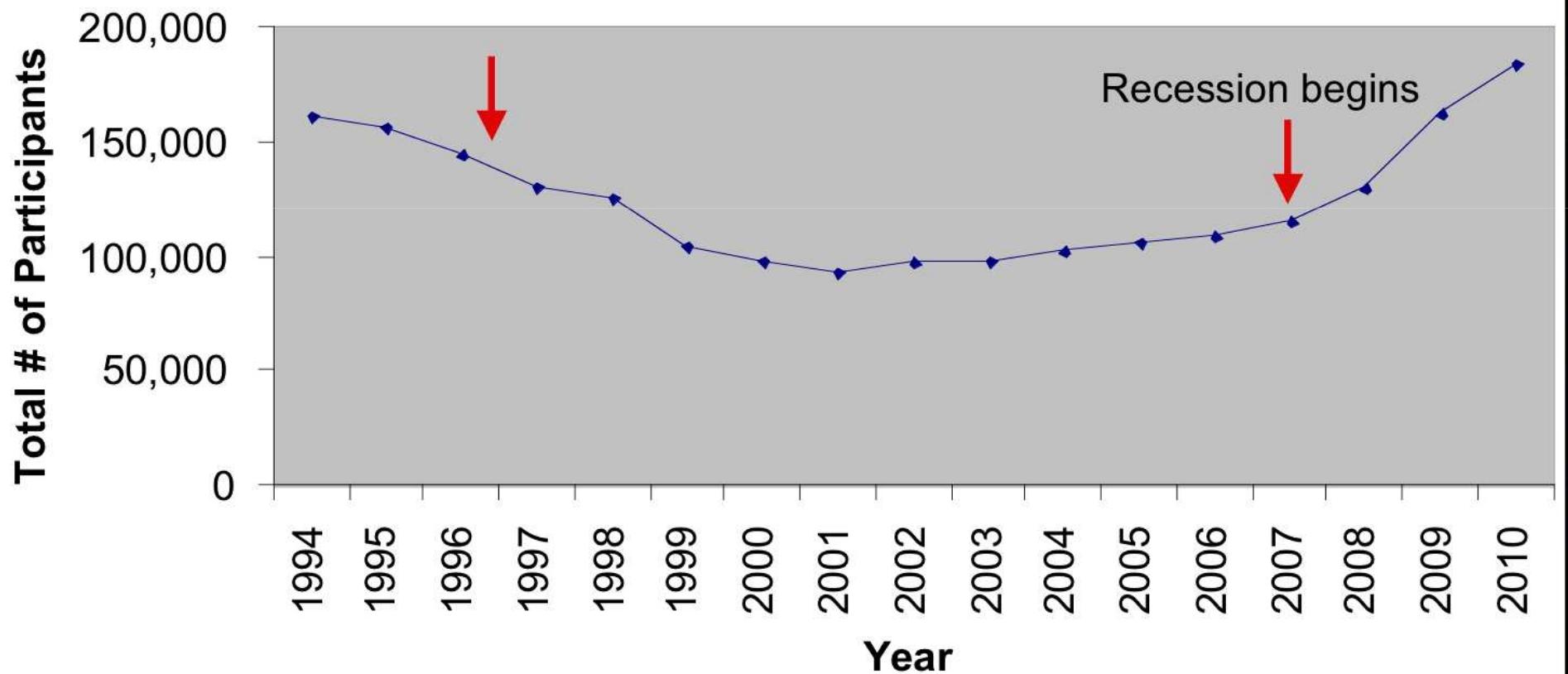
Family-based Programs

- SNAP/FSP
- TANF/TCA
- LIHEAP/MEAP
- EITC/FINANCIAL EDUCATION
- WIC



SNAP/FSP

**SNAP/FSP Total Number of Baltimore City Participants
(for September)**



SNAP/FSP

Spotlight issue: Low monthly benefits

Thrifty Food Plan: price of purchasing a low-cost (economy) market basket of goods that meet nutritional guidelines.

~~TFP > maximum SNAP benefit~~

Calculating Individual Benefits:

$$0.3 \times \text{net income} = \text{expected contribution (EC)}$$

$$\underline{\text{MONTHLY BENEFIT} = \text{maximum SNAP benefit} - \text{EC}}$$

Boston Bounty Bucks

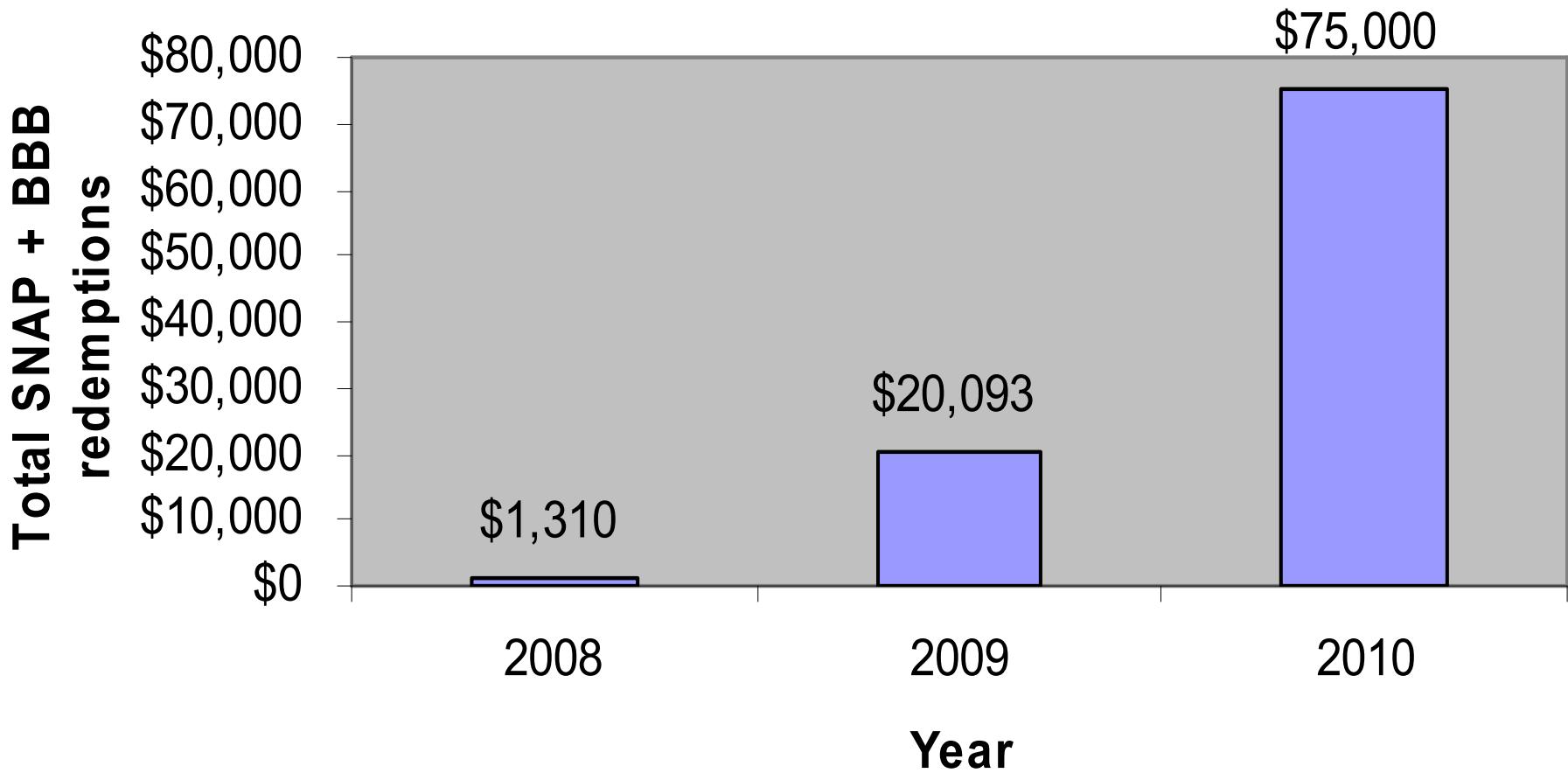
- BBB matches EBT spending at farmers markets dollar to dollar up to \$10, which means it doubles spending at markets up to \$20 per recipient.
- **Benefits:**
 - Incentivizes healthier eating
 - Increases spending power of SNAP benefits
 - Helps local farmers and farmers markets

Boston Bounty Bucks: Facts

- Boston Food Project and the City of Boston.
- Funding: \$30,000 from the Mayor's Fresh Food Fund and \$10,000 grants from Project Bread, Wholesome Wave Foundation, and Farm Aid.
- In a survey at Boston's farmers markets, 72% people using EBT said the BBB was a major deciding factor in why they decided to spend money at the markets versus a conventional store.

BBB cont.

BBB End of the Season Total Sales



Summer Food Service Program

- Overview: provides up to breakfast, lunch, and snacks for children during the summer months.
- Eligibility: sites have to be in area where 50% or more of the children qualify for free/reduced meals or 50% or more of the children enrolled in programs qualify for free/reduced meals

Federal Level

USDA, Food and Nutrition Services (FNS)

State Level

**Maryland State Department of Education
(MSDE):**

Baltimore Housing Office of Community Services: Runs SFSP for Baltimore City County

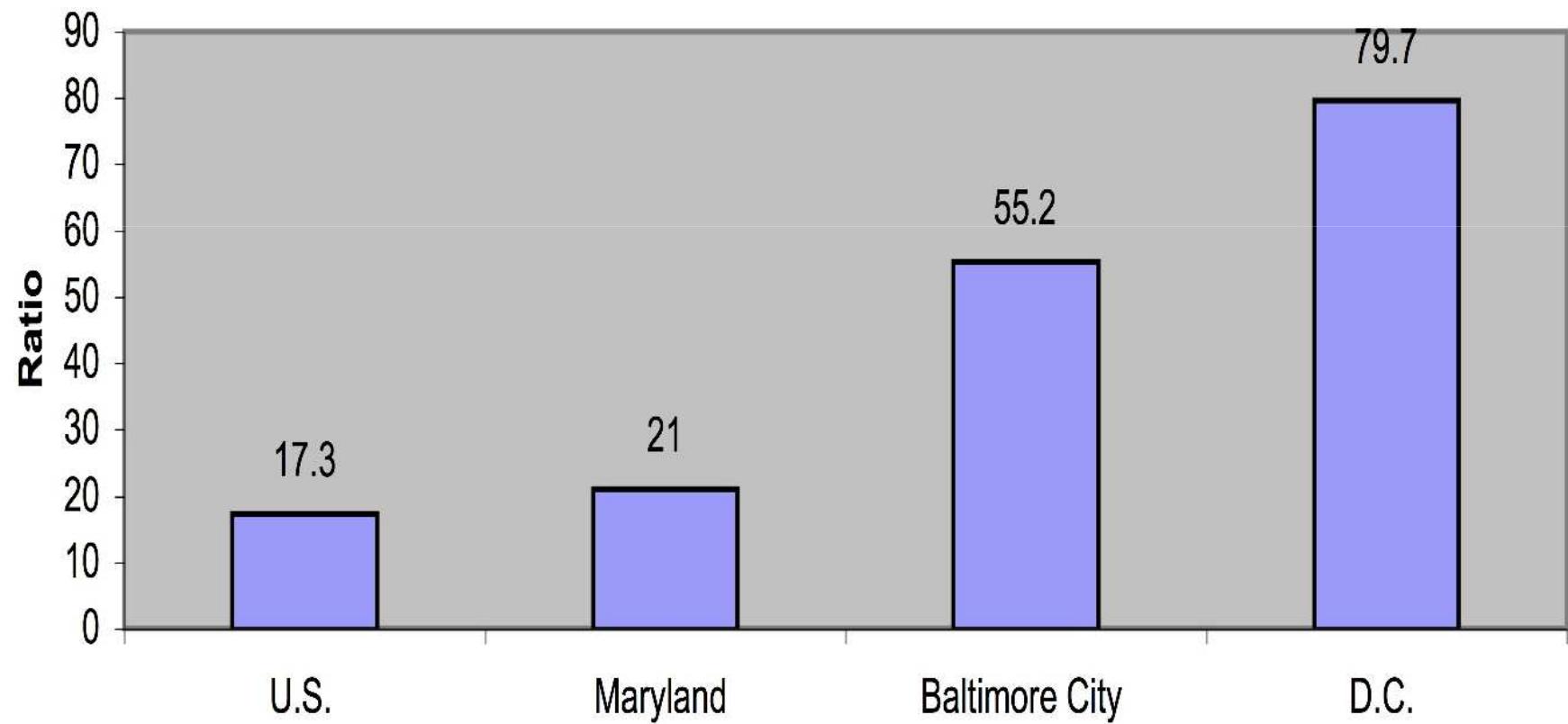
Community organizations & Baltimore City Public Schools

Maryland Food Bank:
Runs SFSP for Baltimore County

Community organizations & Baltimore City Public Schools

Spot Light Issue: Low Participation

SFSP participation compared to NSLP participation



*Data from MD Hunger Solutions

Additional Recommendations

- Link services through certification
- Institutionalize way to collect food insecurity data
- Promote programs that help with service gaps: i.e. Bounty Bucks
- Food insecurity summit or roundtables with cities like Philadelphia and Boston



Work for the Future



- Continue to institutionalize ways of collecting food insecurity data
- Research on cross-utilization of programs
- Collect qualitative data from clients

Hands in Partnership
Civic Works & Clifton Farm
Moveable Feast
Baltimore City Head Start
Bureau of Maternal and Infant Care
Food and Nutrition Services, Baltimore City Public Schools
Center for a Livable Future
Baltimore Montessori School
Department of Human Resources
University of Maryland School of Nursing
Office of Sustainability
Amazing Grace Lutheran Church
Charm City Clinic
Stadium School
Johns Hopkins WIC Clinic
Hampstead Hill Elementary
Baltimore Green Space
Maryland Hunger Solutions
Kodem Kol: Kennedy Krieger
Waverly Farmer's Market
Southeast Baltimore Early Head Start
Park Heights Family Support Center
The Baltimarkets
Maryland Food Bank
Wolfe Street Academy

Baltimore CASH Connection

Thank You!