



Duval County Medical Society

p: (904) 355-6561

w: dcmsonline.org

For more information:

Kristy Williford, DCMS Director of Communications

kristy@dcmsonline.org

(904) 599-2086

DCMS FOUNDATION CREATES LEGISLATION TO FIGHT HUNGER IN JACKSONVILLE

Jacksonville, FL (April 8, 2019) – On April 9, 2019, Jacksonville City Councilmembers will hear first reading of legislation aimed at incentivizing a grocer to enter into a food desert in the northwest quadrant of Jacksonville.

To qualify as a food desert, according to United States Department of Agriculture (“USDA”) standards, at least 500 people in and/or at least 33 percent of the population of an urban census tract must reside more than one mile from a supermarket or large grocery store.

Recent studies on the effects of food deserts found that communities which lack access to fresh, healthy foods will likely result in increased rates of premature death, typically the result of chronic health conditions.

The proposed legislation stems from nearly two years of discussions with city leaders and research into needs and locations following the 2017 DCMS Foundation Future of Healthcare Conference. This annual conference brings together healthcare professionals, local politicians, university leaders, and non-profit organizations to discuss Northeast Florida’s most concerning health issues and work toward unified solutions.

Knowing that nearly 180,000 people in Jacksonville are food insecure, the DCMS Foundation has worked tirelessly to bring its vision to fruition.

“Ultimately, we will not be satisfied until a grocer takes a chance on a community that needs help,” said Sunil Joshi, MD, DCMS Foundation President. “Not just for healthy food options but also to possibly stimulate economic development in the region as well.”

Preliminary discussions with several City Council members have been positive.

“Food deserts are a critical problem that exist in our vulnerable neighborhoods,” said Matt Carlucci, City Council At Large Group 4.

“Families should not be forced into food deserts because of their zip code or their family income,” said Joyce Morgan, City Council District 1.

After introduction on Tuesday, the policy will be further reviewed and will likely come to the Council for a vote in May.

[Click here](#) to read the proposed ordinance.

Interview Opportunities:

Sunil Joshi, MD, DCMS Foundation President: (904) 708-2673

Bryan Campbell, DCMS Chief Executive Officer: (904) 626-2915