According to Feeding America, 1 in 6 people are struggling with hunger in Kentucky. CSG members gathered at the CSG 2018 National Conference Dec. 8 in Covington, Kentucky, to help address this need as part of the CSG Campaign Against Hunger project.

“The Campaign Against Hunger service project has become a wonderful CSG tradition and one of the highlights of our annual conference,” said David Adkins, CSG CEO/executive director. “It gives state leaders from across the country the opportunity to come together in fellowship and give something back to the communities that host us.”

Outreach Inc., in conjunction with CSG, organized attendees to package 39,000 meals to be donated to the Speedway Children’s Charities and Action Ministries of Covington, Kentucky. Outreach is a nonprofit organization that works to provide safe water, food and medical care to those in need.

The pre-packaged meals assembled at Outreach’s events are particularly great for backpack meal programs, said Floyd Hammer, who founded Outreach with his wife Kathy Hamilton in 2004. Backpack meal programs send children in need of food assistance home from school on Fridays with meals for the weekend. Hammer said there is enough food in each of the meals packaged to serve six people, so meals sent home through backpack programs are often able to feed whole families.

The CSG Campaign Against Hunger began as an initiative of Tennessee Senate Majority Leader Mark Norris, former chair of the CSG Southern Legislative Conference, who spearheaded food-packaging events at SLC annual meetings. When Norris became CSG national chair in 2014, CSG adopted the tradition at national conferences. CSG members have packed more than half a million meals since the tradition began in 2011.

Kentucky Senate President Robert Stivers, CSG’s 2018 national chair, said he appreciated his colleagues from across the country for gathering to fight hunger in his home state.

“I remember when this event started in Memphis, Tennessee,” Stivers said. “Thank you for coming out today to pack meals for our neighbors.”