

The background of the slide is a photograph of a desk with architectural blueprints. A desk lamp is in the top left corner. Various drafting tools are scattered on the desk, including a yellow ruler, a pair of compasses, and several markers. The blueprints show floor plans with labels like 'BED RM 2 10'0" x 12'4"', 'STONE WALL', and 'BALCONY ABOVE'.

It's a Long Way To Washington, D.C.

Or, What Does Public Policy Have
To Do with Helping Hungry
Families in Alaska

Just How Far Is It?

- » 4,197 miles
- » 4 time zones
- » 74 hours of driving
- » 14 states and provinces



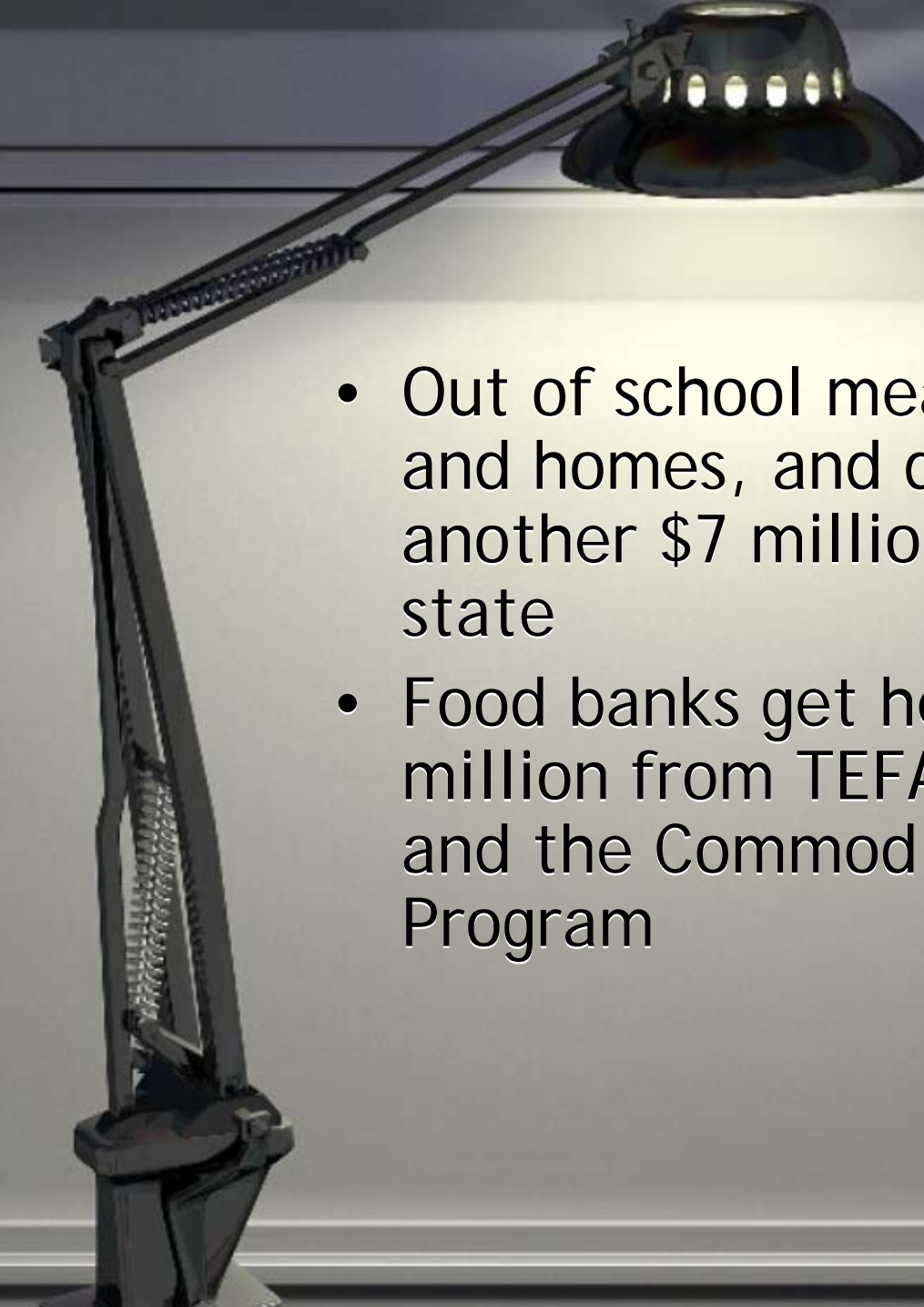
What Does it Matter?

- It's your government: you get to tell it what to do
- So does everyone else, so coalition-building is what it's about
- Let's see what's already coming from D.C. to Alaska for hungry families:



According to USDA:

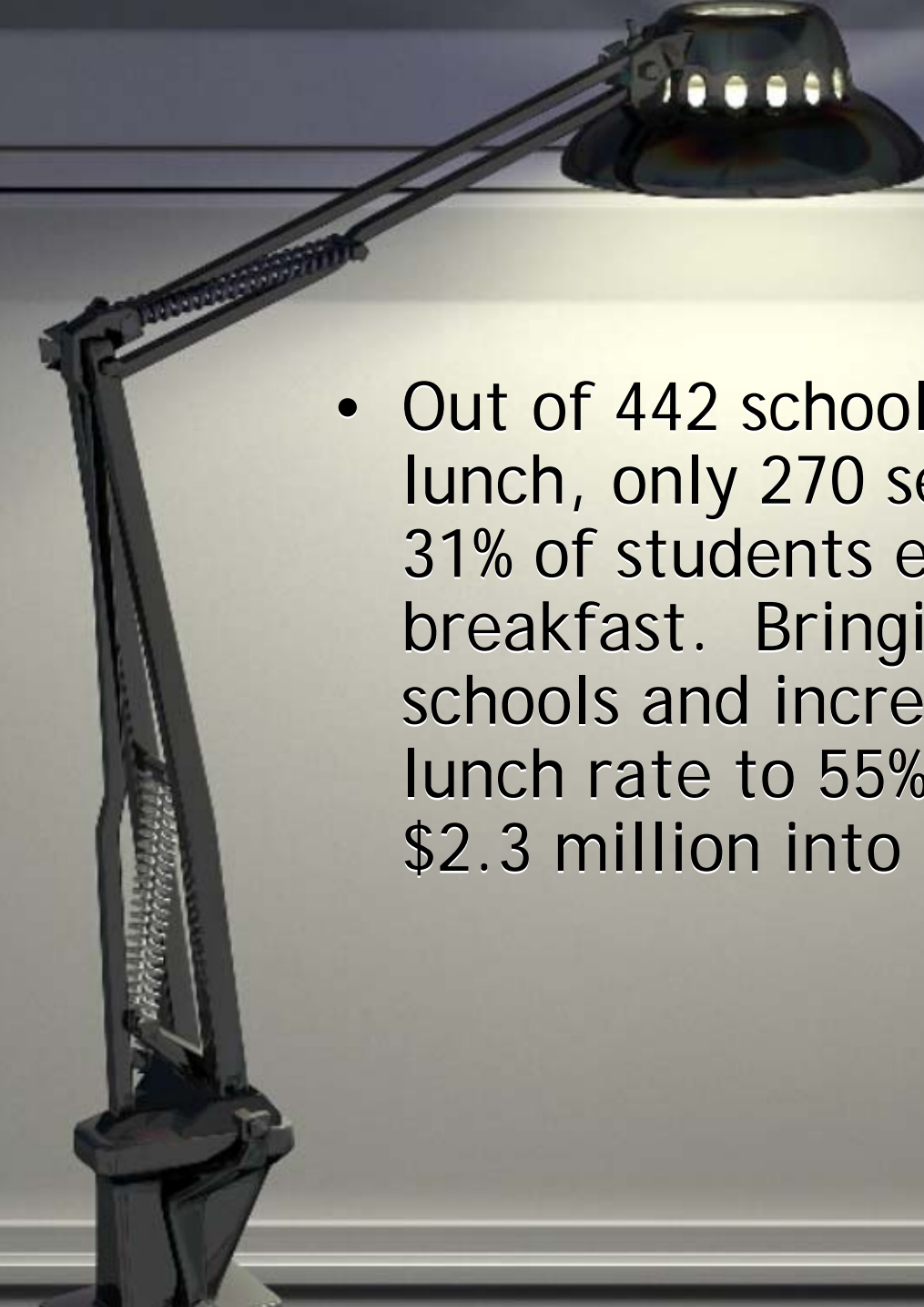
- Each month, about 50,000 folks receive food stamps in AK, bringing in \$64 million per year
- Nearly 30,000 women, infants and children get help from WIC, adding up to \$21 million per year
- Over 50,000 kids eat school lunch daily in AK, 60% receive subsidized meals; the lunch and breakfast programs bring in \$22.8 million per year

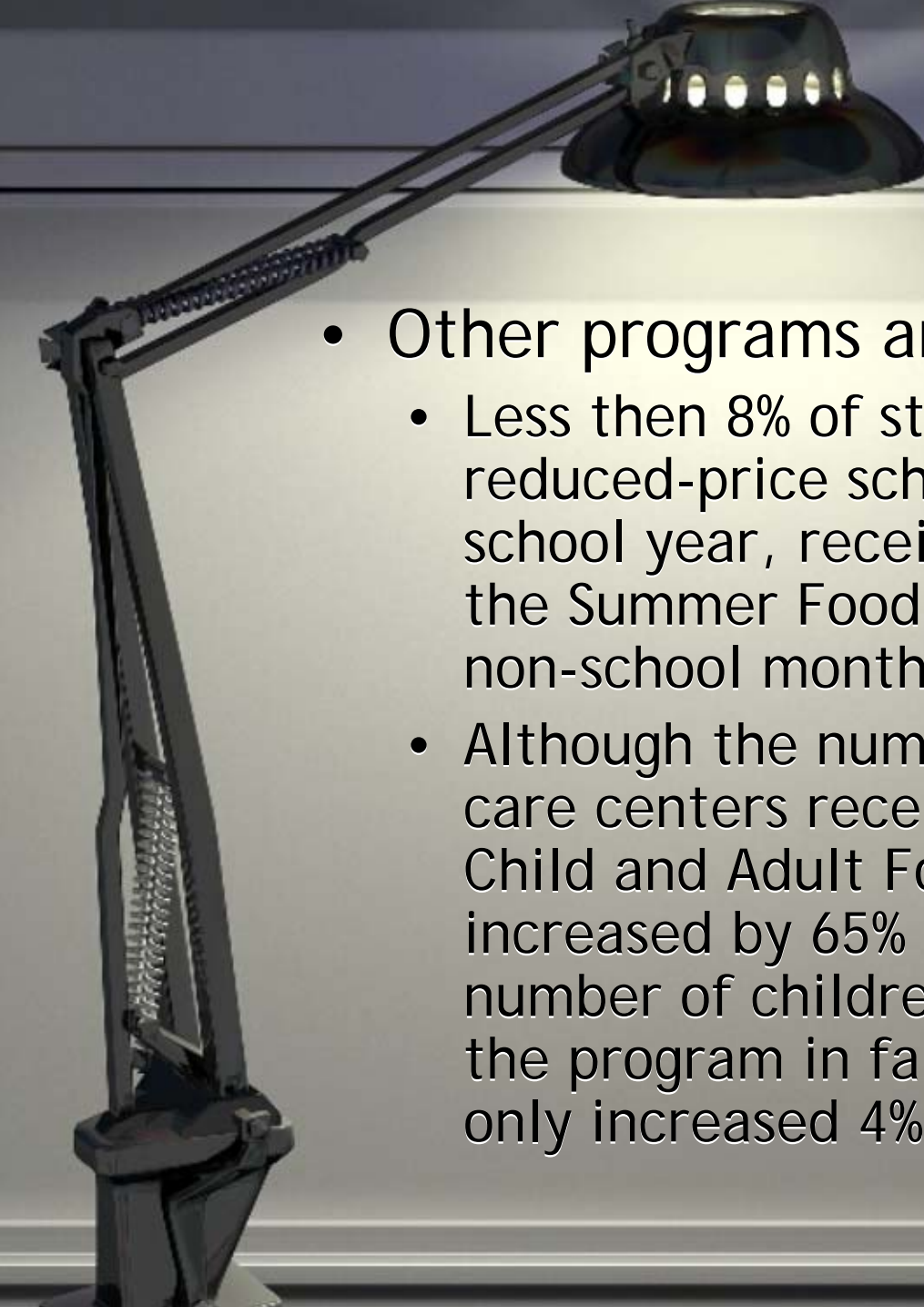
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- Out of school meals in child care centers and homes, and during the summer add another \$7 million plus in revenue to the state
 - Food banks get help, too: about \$1.2 million from TEFAP, bonus commodities and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program

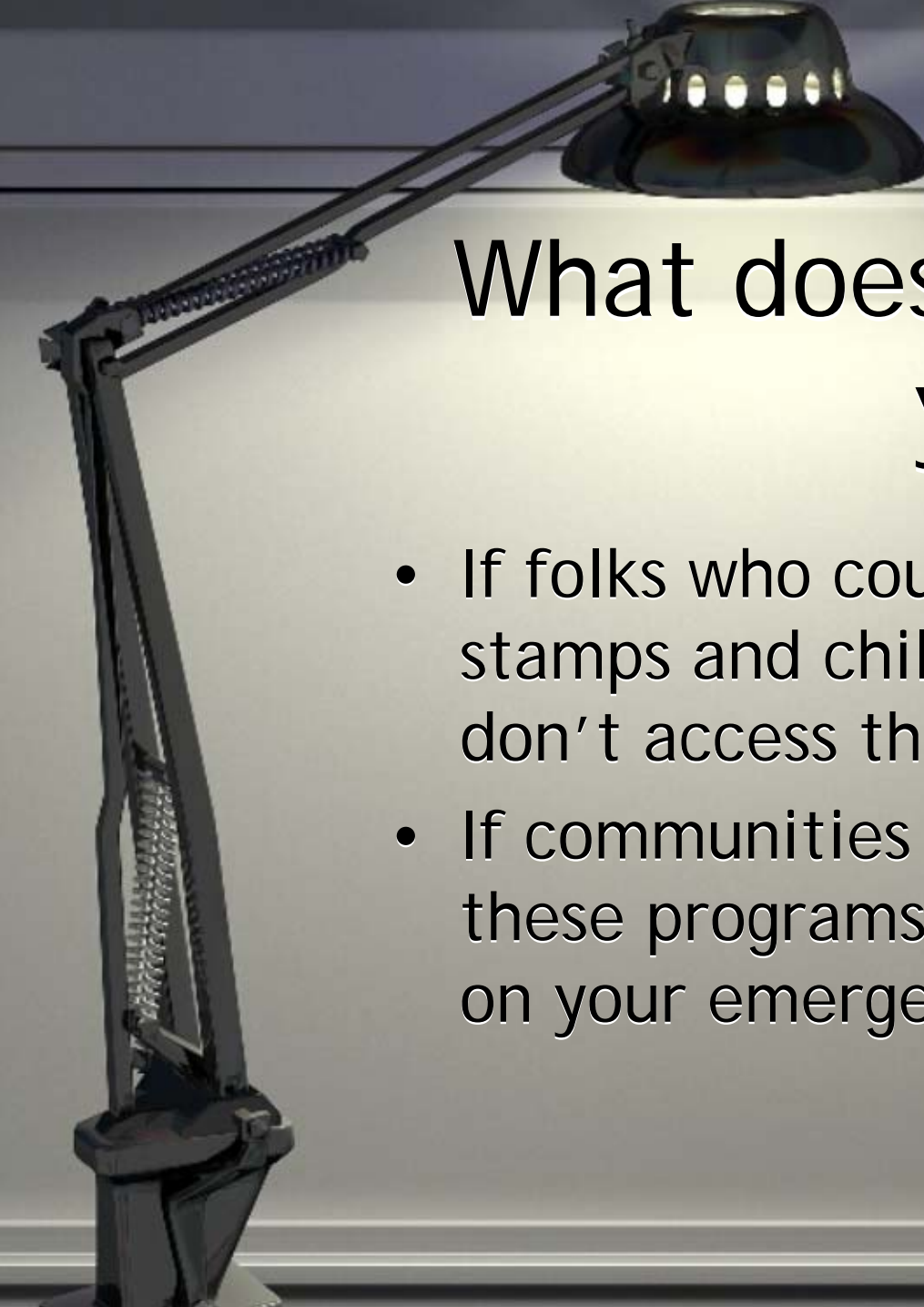


Are These Resources Reaching Folks in Need?

- USDA estimates that 66-78% of eligible folks in AK actually receive food stamps - meaning that there are 19,200 folks who are eligible but not served. The bottom line is that \$25 million more in food stamps funds could be coming in each year

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- Out of 442 schools in AK serving school lunch, only 270 serve breakfast, and only 31% of students eating lunch also eat breakfast. Bringing breakfast to more schools and increasing the breakfast to lunch rate to 55% would bring an added \$2.3 million into the state

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- Other programs are also underutilized:
 - Less than 8% of students eating free or reduced-price school meals during the school year, receive summer meals through the Summer Food Service Program during non-school months
 - Although the number of children in child care centers receiving meals through the Child and Adult Food Program in AK has increased by 65% in the last ten years, the number of children receiving meals through the program in family child care homes has only increased 4%.



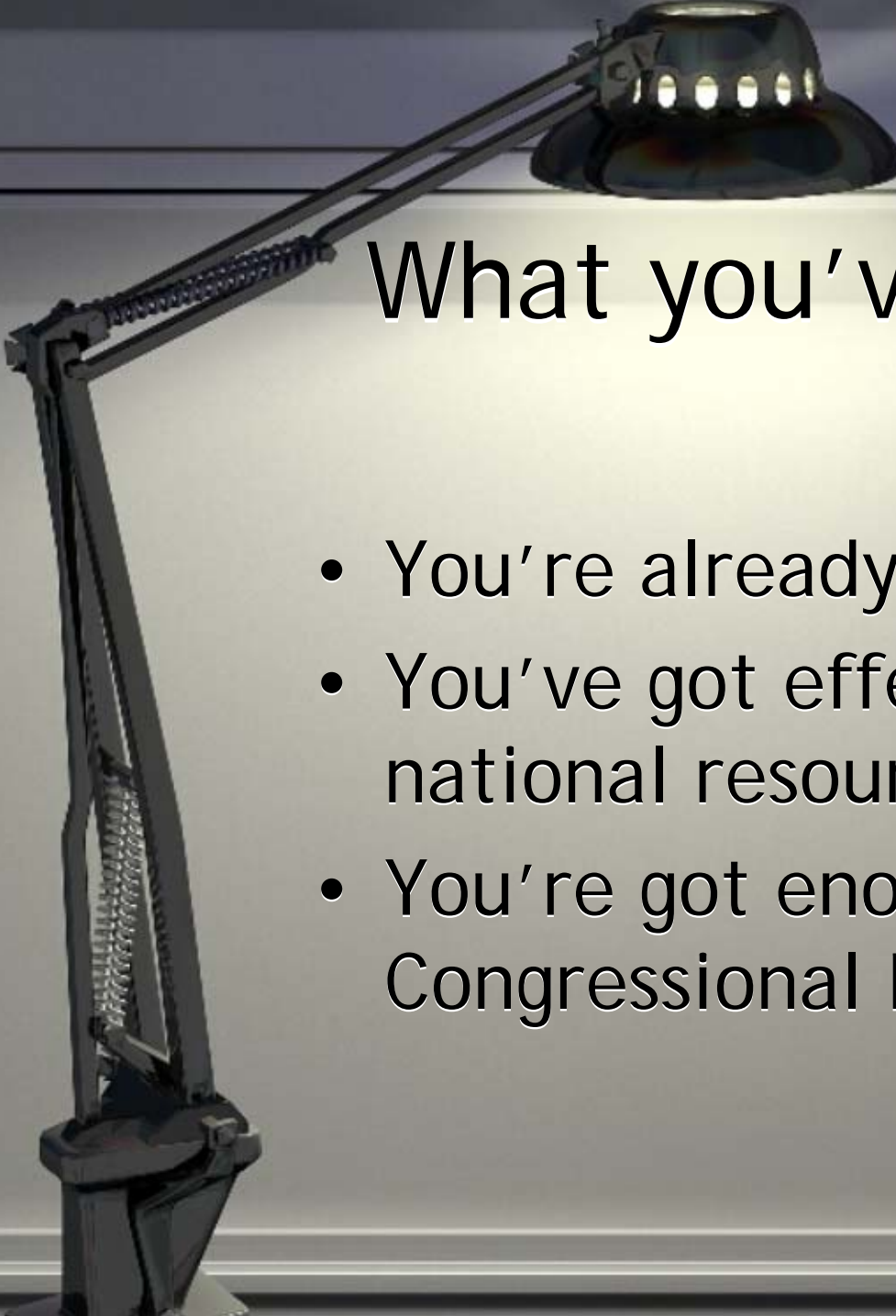
What does this mean to you?

- If folks who could be helped by food stamps and child nutrition programs don't access them, they come to you.
- If communities and schools don't operate these programs, more families must rely on your emergency food resources.



This isn't simple

- Alaska is unique: great size and distance to services, tough winter weather conditions, enormous geographic and cultural diversity.
- Take the barriers to nutrition services in the lower 48 and multiply by 10???



What you've got going for you

- You're already working in coalition
- You've got effective connections to national resources
- You're got enormous power in your Congressional Delegation




There's precedent for addressing your issues:

- In recognition of the higher costs of doing business in AK and HI;
 - Congress provides your state a higher reimbursement rate for school and summer meals
 - Food stamps and other programs have higher income standards here as well



What Can You Do?

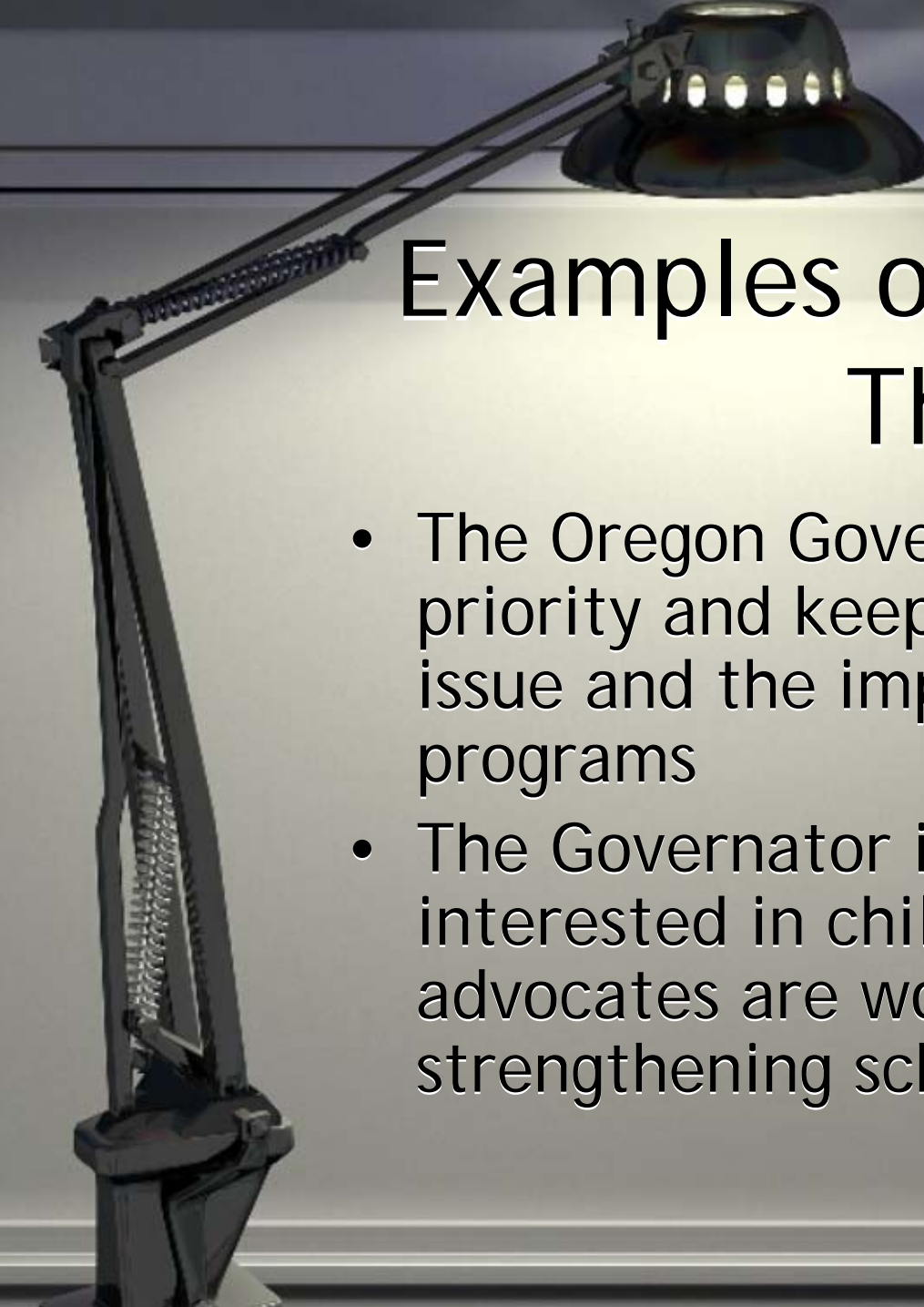
- Get stronger in coalition
- Identify areas where child nutrition and other programs can grow and talk with local school districts and communities
- Help your families access food stamps and other program by knowing the rules yourself and educating them

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- Identify program problems - policy or administration - and join together to fight them
 - Invite your state legislators to visit your programs
 - Think about for the future: taking the issue of hunger to Juneau each legislative session



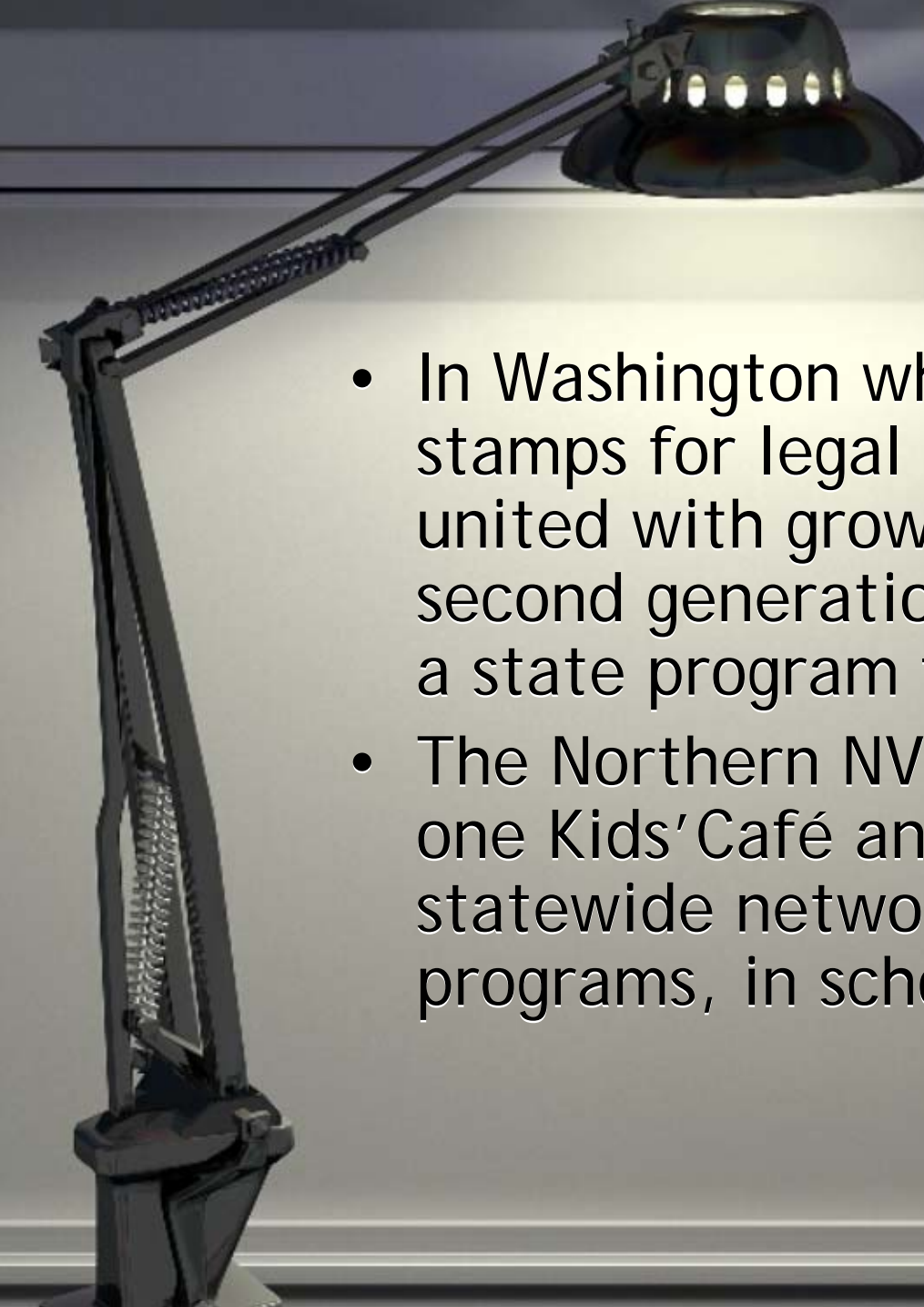
Learn from Other States:

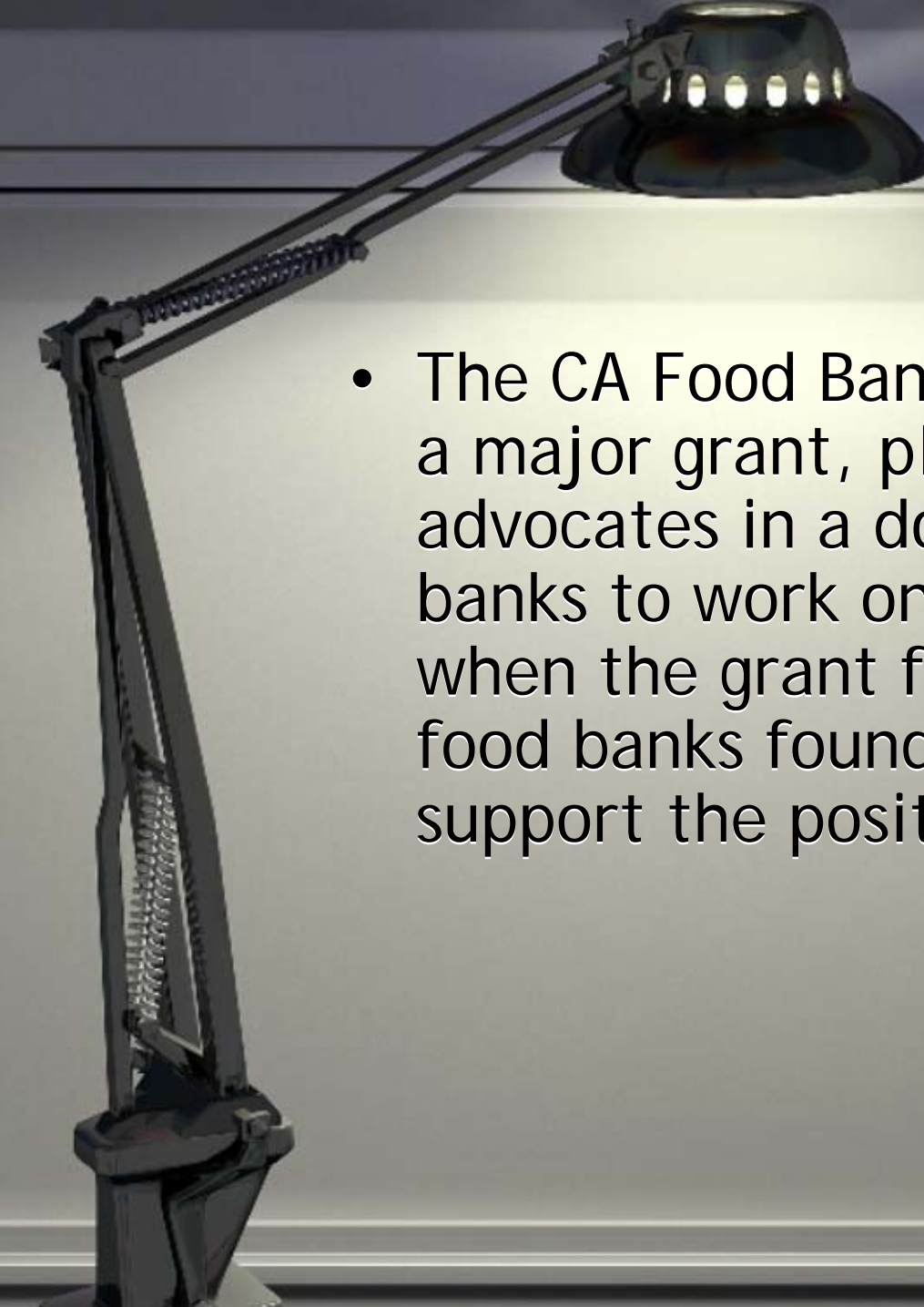
- Borrow liberally from state legislation and funding in other Western states and adapt for the unique conditions in Alaska



Examples of Cool Western Things:

- The Oregon Governor has made hunger a priority and keeps the spotlight on the issue and the importance of public programs
- The Governor in California is interested in childhood obesity so advocates are working with him on strengthening school meals

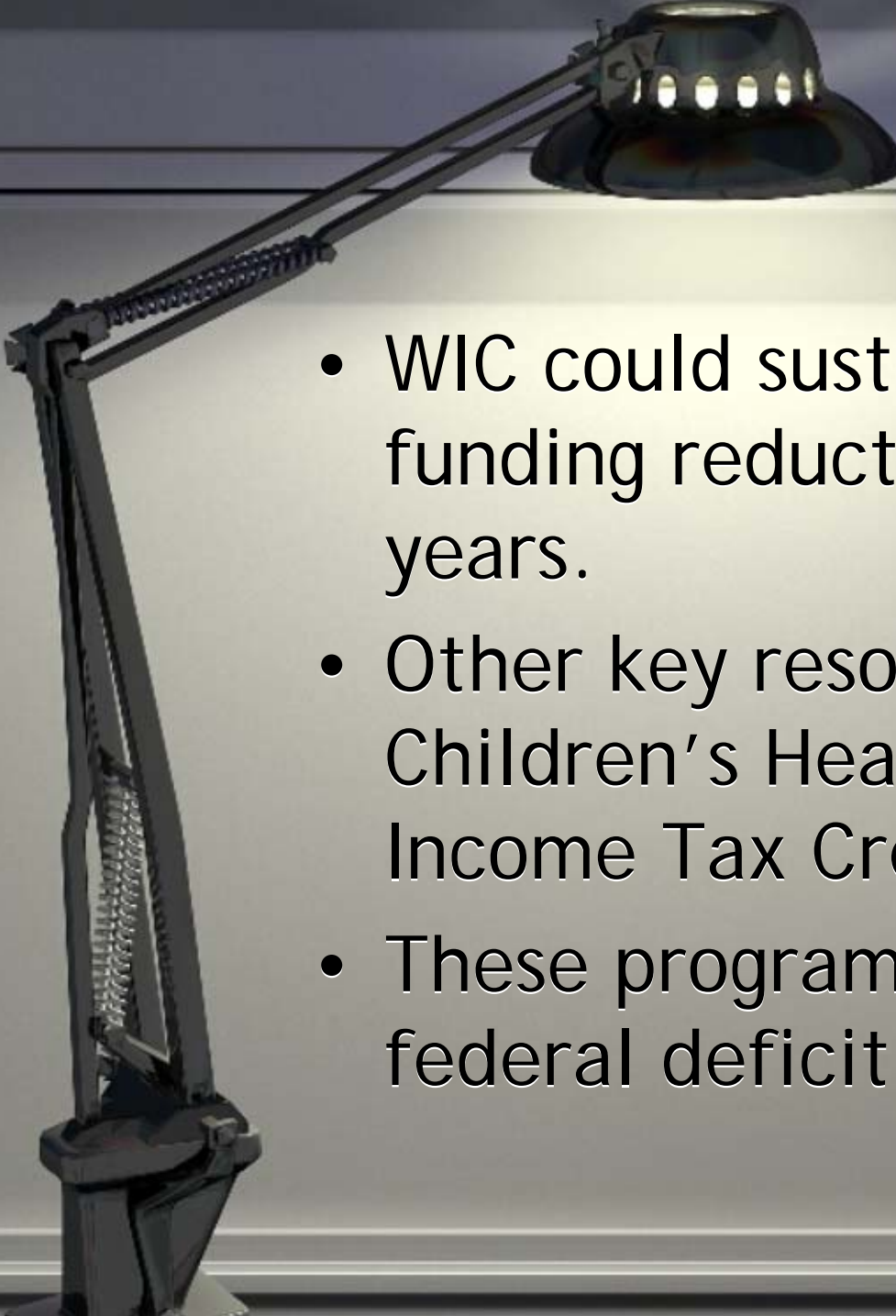
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- In Washington when Congress cut food stamps for legal immigrants, advocates united with growers and the Governor, a second generation immigrant, to create a state program for legal immigrants
 - The Northern NV Food Bank started with one Kids' Café and now is building a statewide network of child nutrition programs, in schools and communities.

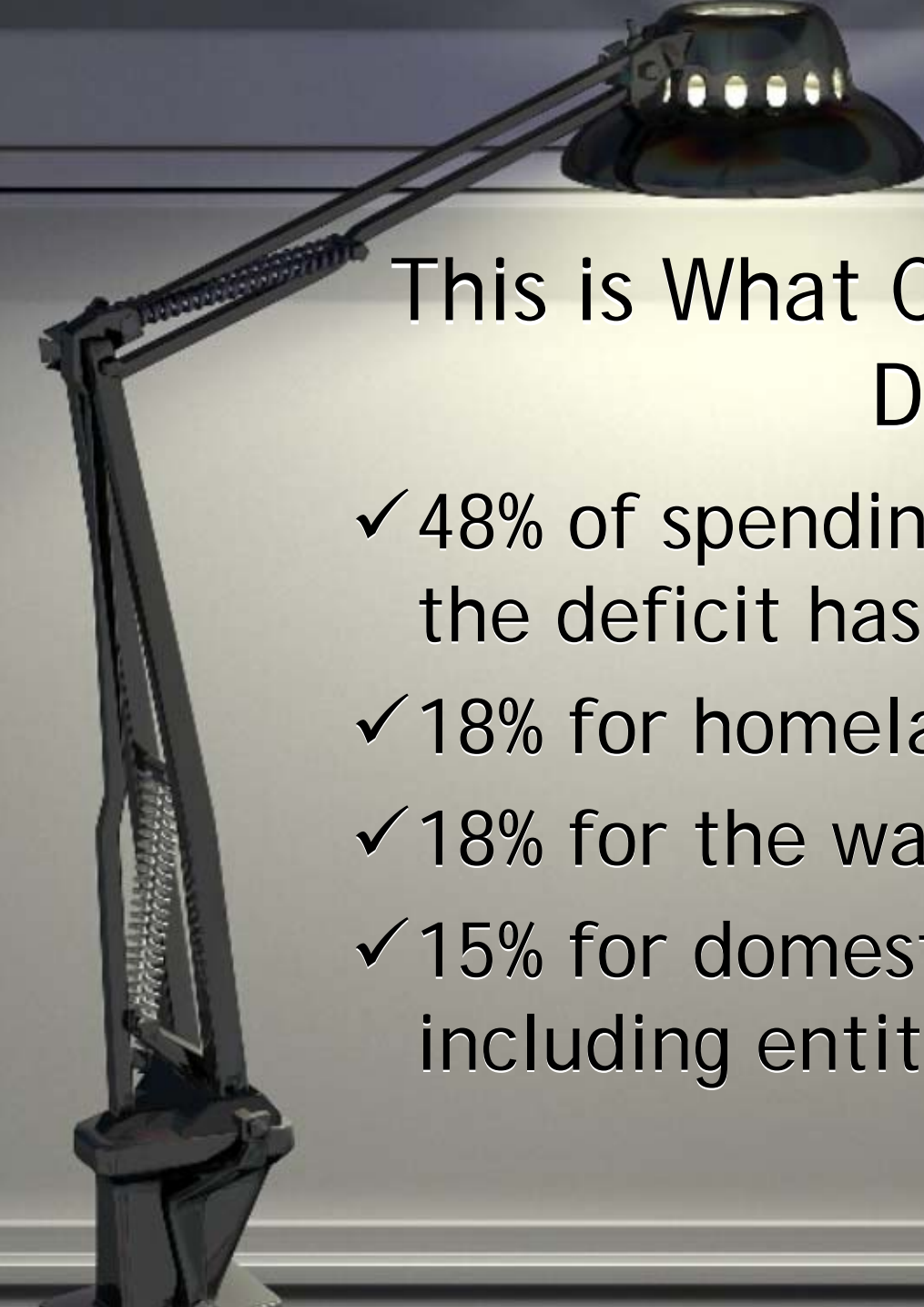
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- The CA Food Bank Assn., with help from a major grant, placed part-time advocates in a dozen northern CA food banks to work on public food programs -- when the grant funds ran out, all the food banks found other funding to support the positions.



What's Going On Now that Important to your Coalition's Future?

- The Federal Budget Resolution cuts \$35 billion out of programs helping poor families.
- Among the cuts could be up to \$3 billion out of the Food Stamp Program.

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- WIC could sustain up to 13% in funding reductions in the next five years.
 - Other key resources like Medicaid, Children's Health and the Earned Income Tax Credit are also targets.
 - These programs did not cause the federal deficit --




This is What Caused the Federal Deficit:


- ✓ 48% of spending since 2001 driving the deficit has gone for tax cuts
- ✓ 18% for homeland security
- ✓ 18% for the war in Iraq
- ✓ 15% for domestic programs including entitlements



What Can We Do About the Federal Budget Resolution?

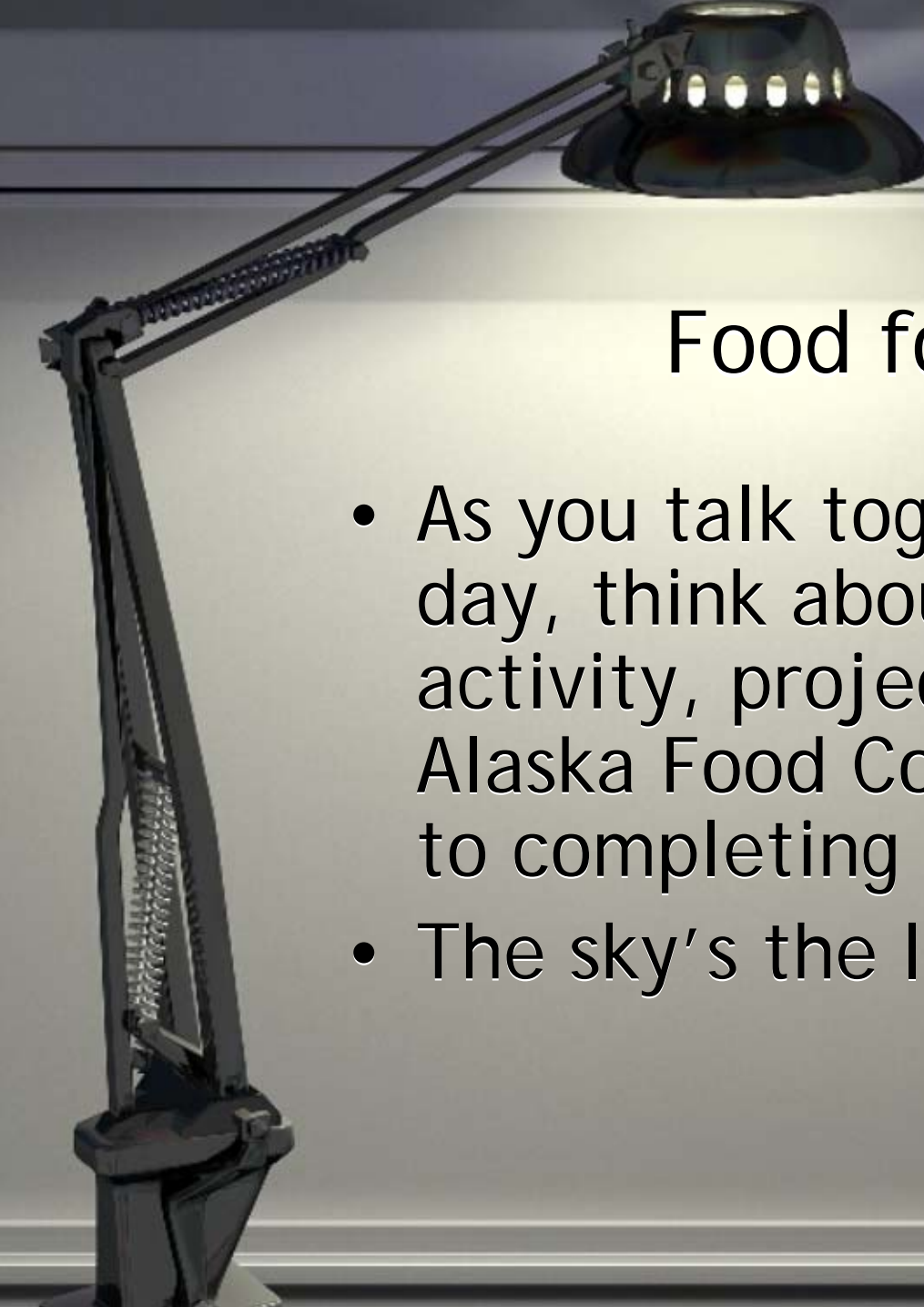
- The next step is that Congressional committees begin to work on specific cuts:
 - For example, the Agriculture Committees have to find \$3 billion
 - The choices are farm subsidies, conservation or nutrition programs
 - We need to make sure they understand the consequences of their decisions in their home communities.

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- You can help by understanding the consequences in Alaska and educating others:
 - Your board and staff;
 - Your clients;
 - Your friends;
 - Local and state policy makers;
 - Your Congressional Delegation




How the Western Region Anti-Hunger Consortium Can Help

- By keeping you informed: check out www.wrahc.org.
- By helping the AK Food Coalition strengthen its role in advocacy
- We'd love to have another AK organization attend our WRAHC meetings



Food for Thought:

- As you talk together over the next day, think about one new advocacy activity, project or initiative the Alaska Food Coalition could commit to completing over the next year
- The sky's the limit!



Thanks for giving me a chance to visit your
amazing state!!

Keep in touch:
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