

# OHIO AS A LEADER ~ A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO HUNGER RELIEF

## 3 Things to Understand about Hunger...

**Hunger looks like you and me.**

**Hunger does irreparable harm to people, communities and our state's economy.**

**Hunger is completely preventable.**

**But most importantly, the costs associated with pervasive hunger will bankrupt Ohio and the nation, devastate families, escalate health care needs, and disrupt local communities.**

### Hunger in Ohio

More than 1.75 million Ohioans are food insecure - meaning they don't know where their next meal is coming from. The USDA ranked Ohio the 9th worst state for very low food security in the country from 2015-2017, with about 285,000 households containing some members with reduced food intake or disrupted eating patterns.

The Ohio Association of Foodbanks serves **1 in 6 Ohioans** each year. Last year, the association distributed more than 216 million pounds of food — almost the same amount as the previous year. Although recent reports suggest the economic picture is improving, Ohio continues to lag the nation and has still not returned to pre-recession numbers.

The 2020-2021 State Budget is an opportunity for Governor Mike DeWine and the Ohio General Assembly to initiate their leadership in reducing hunger and food insecurity in the Buckeye state, and to continue the strong, bipartisan support for hunger relief in Ohio that has been present for two decades.

### Strategy for Success: Our Budget Request

**The Ohio Association of Foodbanks is requesting \$30 million per year over the 2020-2021 biennium (\$60 million total) to fund a Comprehensive Approach to Hunger Relief, representing just \$1.25 per person, per month served by the statewide network.**

The funds will be used for continuation and expansion of the following programs:

- **Ohio Food Program & Agricultural Clearance Program:** To secure and distribute at least 55 million pounds of nutritious, wholesome foods at an average of just 33 cents per pound.
- **Innovative Summer Meals Programs for Children:** To provide kid-friendly, shelf-stable meals and fresh fruits

and vegetables to children in rural or underserved areas of Ohio through three proven programs.

- **The Ohio Benefit Bank:** To support free tax filing for low- and moderate-income taxpayers and to leverage matching funding from the USDA for SNAP outreach.
- **Capacity Building Resources for Charitable Organizations:** To provide updated refrigeration and freezer equipment for food pantries and to leverage matching funding for AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associates.

### Why it Works

Under the proposed Comprehensive Approach, programs that address food insecurity in the state and are overseen by the Ohio Association of Foodbanks will:

- Have reduced administrative costs and overhead;
- Work in an integrated manner that maximizes opportunities for efficiency and cost savings;
- Have increased ability to leverage food purchase and public-private partnerships across programs; and
- Streamline operations and overall program effectiveness.

**Above all, through this unified initiative, the Comprehensive Approach will direct the maximum amount of state dollars available to Ohioans who need it most, putting food on the tables of Ohio families, positioning our children to be healthy and ready to learn, protecting the welfare of our senior citizens and other vulnerable populations, and setting the hunger standard among states.**

**For more information, visit [www.OhioFoodbanks.org](http://www.OhioFoodbanks.org).**