

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF FOODBANKS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 16, 2017

President Trump's Budget Blueprint Would Disinvest in Proven Programs that Foster Innovation, Promote Public-Private Collaboration and Protect Vulnerable People

Media Statement from Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, executive director for the Ohio Association of Foodbanks:

“The budget blueprint released earlier today by the Trump administration proposes eliminating a long list of programs that have been critical parts of the fabric of our country and local communities. The administration has proposed these cuts in a desire to reduce spending, but as Ohio’s largest charitable response to hunger, we know that these cuts will actually result in increased burdens on state and local governments, increased poverty, hunger and homelessness, and increased suffering for the least among us.

“We have been proud to lead an AmeriCorps VISTA program in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service for more than a decade. In that time, more than 400 national service members have spent a year working full-time on projects that fight hunger and poverty in local communities. Right now, we have members working on everything from fundraising to install new irrigation systems for community gardens, to developing and implementing year-round nutrition education programming for low-income families, to mapping food deserts and social service capacity for an entire county. Our members are fostering real change and making big impacts, and they’re doing it in exchange for a living allowance of about \$970 per month and an education award that helps them pay down student debt or go back to school. AmeriCorps is a longstanding, bipartisan approach to making modest investments in local communities that generate lasting results. We strongly object to the administration’s proposal to eliminate funding for the Corporation for National and Community Service.

“The budget blueprint also proposes eliminating key programs in the Office of Community Services. In Ohio, more than 400,000 low-income households would lose one-time, yearly payments that help with heating their homes due to the elimination of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. In real terms, that means that hundreds of thousands of low-income families and seniors may face having their utilities shut off in the coldest winter months. Unfortunately, the budget would also eliminate the Community Services Block Grant, which is the core funding for Community Action Agencies. Those agencies are, in many cases, one of the few places left in rural Ohio where low-income Ohioans can turn for basic help with food, shelter and other resources.

“This proposal is an attack on core American values. It disinvests in programs like AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and the Senior Community Services Employment Program that empower people to better themselves and their communities. It puts more than 400,000 Ohio households – nearly 9 in 10 of which contain either elderly or disabled individuals or children under 5 – at risk of literally being left out in the cold. We encourage Congress to firmly reject this approach to balancing the budget and funding defense spending on the backs of the poor.”

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Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, representing the Ohio Association of Foodbanks, is available for interviews on how this budget proposal would impact vulnerable Ohioans. To arrange an interview, please reach out to her at the contact information below.

About the Ohio Association of Foodbanks

The Ohio Association of Foodbanks is Ohio’s largest charitable response to hunger, representing Ohio’s 12 Feeding America foodbanks and 3,300 member charities including food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters. In SFY 2016, the association and its member foodbanks were able to acquire and distribute over 208 million pounds of food and grocery items. The association also serves as the home of The Ohio Benefit Bank and operates the state’s largest navigator program for the Affordable Care Act. Follow the association on [Twitter](#), stay connected on [Facebook](#) and visit them on the web at www.ohiofoodbanks.org.

Contact: Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, executive director for the Ohio Association of Foodbanks at 614-221-4336 ext. 222 or 614-271-4803 (cell) or lisa@ohiofoodbanks.org