



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Bipartisan Senate Farm Bill Responsible Way Forward to Protect Nutrition Programs
Media Statement from Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, executive director for the Ohio Association of Foodbanks:

“Today, the Senate Agriculture Committee passed its version of the Farm Bill on a broad bipartisan basis. We join with a wide array of groups, stakeholders, advocates and community members in applauding the Committee’s approach. Unlike the House Farm Bill, this legislation protects the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), making responsible investments in program integrity and workforce development without risking access to basic nutrition assistance for vulnerable Americans.

“Unfortunately, the Senate Farm Bill does not adequately invest in The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which is essential for foodbanks to respond to gaps left by SNAP. TEFAP is a significant source of foods like fruits, vegetables, protein and dairy purchased from U.S. growers and producers. Nearly half of all food insecure households in Ohio earn slightly too much to be eligible for SNAP – yet still rely on our food assistance network for help. We rely on TEFAP to meet that need.

“Although we are disappointed that the legislation does not provide a larger investment in TEFAP, we are hopeful that opportunities to increase investment in TEFAP will be possible as the bill moves to the full floor. Most importantly, we are deeply grateful that the Senate Farm Bill protects SNAP, our nation’s most critical line of defense against hunger and food insecurity.

“We encourage the full Senate to continue to protect SNAP as this legislation moves forward. We also urge members of the House to follow the Senate’s lead and insist on a bipartisan approach to the House’s version of the Farm Bill. The stakes are too high for our nation’s agriculture community, food economy and families for the House to needlessly attack the most vulnerable, food insecure people in our country. We thank the Senate Agriculture Committee, including Ohio’s own Senator Sherrod Brown, for their leadership on this bipartisan legislation.”

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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 2017, the association and its member foodbanks were able to acquire and distribute over 216 million pounds of food and grocery items. The association has also served as the home of The Ohio Benefit Bank since 2006. 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
614-271-4803 (cell) – or – lisa@ohiofoodbanks.org