



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**Ohio Association of Foodbanks Statement on Hunger Relief Investments in House Omnibus
Media Statement from Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, executive director, Ohio Association of Foodbanks**

“The Ohio Association of Foodbanks extends our deepest appreciation to Ohio House Speaker Stephens, Speaker Pro Tempore Oelslager, Finance Chairman Rep. Edwards, Minority Leader Russo, Ranking member Rep. Sweeney, Rep. Seitz, Rep. Cross, Rep. Callender, Rep. Carruthers, Rep. Liston, and members of Ohio House Leadership and the Ohio House Finance Committee for prioritizing hunger relief in the omnibus amendment to H.B. 33.

“By providing an amendment for an additional \$15 million per year to support the Ohio Food Program and Agricultural Clearance Program, Ohio House leaders and members have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to not only reduce hunger and hardship for Ohio children, families, workers, older adults and disabled Ohioans, but also to support Ohio’s number one industry, agriculture. The funding will allow us to direct more surplus, locally grown fruits and vegetables, protein and dairy, staple shelf-stable items and non-food household essentials to Ohioans in all 88 counties.

“Millions of Ohioans are struggling to stretch their wages to pay for increased costs for everything from housing to transportation to food. Nearly 1.5 million Ohioans lost a total of \$126 million per month in SNAP Emergency Allotments last month. These are our frontline workers, our parents with young children, our college students, our older adults, our kids – our neighbors and friends. They should not have to worry about whether they will be able to feed themselves or their families. Fortunately, our statewide network of 12 regional foodbanks and 3,600 local hunger relief partners have worked hard for not only the past three years, but for more than three decades, to stand in the gap. And we absolutely couldn’t fulfill our missions as Ohio’s foodbanks without the support of the State of Ohio.

“We also extend our thanks for the inclusion of state funding to reimburse the cost of reduced-price meals, making free school meals available to more Ohio students – a meaningful investment in Ohio’s children. The pandemic showed the country that school meals for all students are a necessary ingredient for overall success and wellness each school day, and this is an exciting building block toward that future.

“Ohio foodbanks applaud food security champions in the Ohio House for investing in our decades-long public-private partnership and promoting improved food and economic security for households facing the end of pandemic-era relief programs, high food prices and prolonged inflation. We look forward to partnering with the Ohio Senate to see these shared goals cross the finish line for Ohio families.”

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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 3,600 member charities including food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters. In SFY 2022, the association and its member foodbanks were able to acquire and distribute more than 242 million pounds of food and grocery items. Follow the association on [Twitter](#), stay connected on [Facebook](#) and visit them on the web at www.ohiofoodbanks.org.

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