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**Ohio Association of Foodbanks Statement on Debt Ceiling Debate
Implications for Ohioans Experiencing Food and Economic Hardship**

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

“It is unacceptable and un-American to suggest that the most vulnerable people in our society – workers earning low wages, families with children, older adults and disabled Americans – should be at risk of once again being pushed further into economic peril. They are worried about inflation and high costs, [racking up credit card debt](#) to afford basic needs, and turning to foodbanks at levels we did not see even at the height of the pandemic – at levels we have never experienced.

“Just two months ago, pandemic-era Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit boosts ended. This change took \$126 million per month in grocery-buying power out of the pockets of 1.5 million Ohioans. An average 3-person household lost about \$200 per month in food assistance, overnight. [We recently spoke at length with five disabled SNAP participants from Ohio](#) about their experiences with the program and how this drastic drop in SNAP has impacted them. They spoke about the harm it has already caused to their physical and mental health and how much more dignity and hope they felt when they had enough to buy the healthy food they need to manage their chronic conditions.

“Yet some members of the U.S. House are playing a dangerous game with the wellbeing of their constituents and threatening to slash SNAP benefits for older workers even more drastically, as well as risk Medicaid coverage for more than 10 million Americans, among other harmful proposals. This approach is not sound public policy – cutting budgets on the backs of the poorest Americans does not drive down costs. Instead, it risks worsening health outcomes, higher health care costs, increased housing instability and homelessness and rising rates of hunger.

“The President and Congressional leaders must refuse budget cuts or policy changes that increase poverty or take food or health care away from people. Ohio’s foodbanks are already at our breaking point, doing our best to stand in the significant gaps left after pandemic-era supports ended in the midst of record inflation and historically high prices. But we cannot begin to make up for the budget shortfalls Ohio households are already facing, and we simply cannot accept a federal budget that harms them further.”

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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.

Contact: Joree Novotny, Chief of Staff for the Ohio Association of Foodbanks
614-273-5818 (cell) – or – jnovotny@ohiofoodbanks.org