

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), commonly known as 'food stamps,' stands as our nation's largest and most effective public aid program, serving as a primary defense against hunger. **For every meal provided by the Feeding America food bank network, SNAP benefits supply nine.** Particularly vital for low-income older adults, SNAP contributes significantly to achieving food security. The current minimum SNAP benefit of \$23 per month falls short in providing adequate nutrition support. The low benefit amount also contributes to low SNAP participation among those eligible who may be hesitant to reach out for help and reluctant to tackle the paperwork required to enroll in the program.

Representatives Troy (D-Willowick) and Edwards (R-Nelsonville) have introduced **House Bill 428 that would leverage state funds to increase the minimum SNAP benefit for Ohio's older adults to \$50 per month.** While traditionally the federal government finances 100% of SNAP benefits, the current federal minimum SNAP benefit of \$23 per month falls short for those on a limited budget in providing adequate nutrition support, especially amidst record food inflation, with grocery costs surging by 25% over the past four years. Because of this, advocates have determined **SNAP benefit adequacy should be promoted on both the state and federal levels to ensure the most vulnerable among us have access to food resources, no matter who pays the difference.** Currently the state of New Mexico and Maryland finances an increased minimum SNAP benefit with state dollars for older adults, with the state of New Jersey, New York and California financing an increased benefit for all SNAP beneficiaries. **It's imperative that the General Assembly consider and act upon this proposal before the year's end, ahead of a new legislative session. Investing state resources to enhance the minimum SNAP benefit offers a pragmatic approach to improving the quality of life for our most vulnerable citizens while alleviating strain on charitable and emergency food networks.**

Here are the facts:



Ohio's older adults on fixed incomes simply cannot make ends meet

By 2025, more than 1 in 4 Ohioans will be 60+

Older Ohioans (age 60+) now make up nearly **1 in 4 of all food pantry visitors across Ohio**

Visits to food pantries by older **Ohioans increased by 107%** over the decade leading up to the pandemic.

There are currently **70,000 60+ Ohio SNAP households receiving the federal minimum of \$23** in benefits each month.

Visit <https://p2a.co/KzAdpkw> to learn more about opportunities for action that you can take!



Providing a more adequate benefit can increase SNAP participation and draw down additional federal dollars to support food security

7.4% of Ohio households age 60+ are facing food insecurity, with 2.5% considered very low food security.

Each \$1 in SNAP benefits during a downturn **generates between \$1.50 and \$1.80 in economic activity.**



Access to SNAP can help reduce healthcare costs

Studies have shown that older adults who are food insecure have diets that are less nutritious, worse health outcomes, and higher risk of depression than those with enough food. **Access to SNAP benefits can reduce food insecurity, increase medication adherence, and contribute to health care savings.** In other words, access to SNAP benefits helps older adults age in place and with dignity.



Check out this Op-Ed on the topic. You too can write an Op-Ed to your local media! Reach out to learn more.



Listen to our Just a Bite podcast episode on aging in Ohio featuring a neighbor with lived experience.