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**Ohio Association of Foodbanks Statement on the U.S. House of Representatives Consideration of the Budget Reconciliation Bill**

*Media Statement from Joree Novotny, executive director, Ohio Association of Foodbanks*

“As Congress considers the budget reconciliation legislation this week, the Ohio Association of Foodbanks urges lawmakers to reject proposals that would reduce funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid. These programs are vital for everyday Ohioans in every Congressional district. Cutting them would only worsen hunger and hardship across our state.

“SNAP is a lifeline for Ohioans when they experience crisis or when their wages, retirement incomes, or disability benefits don’t stretch far enough to afford healthy food. But the current proposal would shift nearly \$500 million in SNAP costs onto the State of Ohio each year. That’s about the same as all the state general revenue spent to operate the entire Ohio Department of Job and Family Services each year. If this language passes, state governments in Ohio and across the country would be forced to make impossible choices. These choices include raising taxes on families already stretched thin, cutting benefits to people who depend on them, or worse, being unable to operate SNAP or provide any help with groceries, no matter the circumstances. States have to balance their budgets, and normally SNAP responds cyclically during a recession, infusing dollars into local economies and generating local tax revenue. This would do the opposite – making it even harder for states to balance their budgets, generate economic activity and maintain vital services during future economic downturns.

“Hunger is a harsh reality for 1.8 million Ohioans. This includes children, seniors, veterans, and working families. Even with SNAP, which provides less than \$6 per person, per day on average, many Ohio families are struggling to afford enough food as prices remain high. Ohio’s foodbanks are doing everything they can, distributing more than 230 million meals last year, but we can’t fill the gap if SNAP is fundamentally changed in such a drastic way. Similarly, cuts to Medicaid will result in more impossible tradeoffs for families choosing between food, medicine, and medical care.

“This cost shift wouldn’t just hurt families, it would impact local grocery stores, farmers, and food suppliers, threatening jobs and access to fresh food in communities across Ohio. With state budgets already tight, this proposal would force painful cuts to vital services or raise taxes at a time when families are barely making ends meet.

“We urge Congress to reject these harmful proposals and to preserve SNAP as a fully federally funded, effective safety net. Ohio’s foodbanks stand ready to work with lawmakers to ensure all Ohioans have access to nutritious food and affordable health care.”

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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, hot meals, and other hunger relief programs. In SFY 2024, the association and its member foodbanks were able to acquire and distribute more than 292 million pounds of food and grocery items. Visit them on the web at [www.ohiofoodbanks.org](http://www.ohiofoodbanks.org).

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