



Testimony before the Senate Finance Committee

Amended Substitute House Bill 166 – FY 2020-21 Budget Bill

Friday, June 14, 2019

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Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Burke, Ranking Member Sykes, and distinguished members of the Ohio Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, executive director of the Ohio Association of Foodbanks, Ohio's largest charitable response to hunger.

On behalf of our 12 foodbanks, who provided over 216 million pounds of food to more than 3,500 hunger relief agencies and programs, I'm here today to thank you for your previous support and to applaud and thank you for the providing much needed support for an additional \$5 million per year in funding in Amended Sub. H.B. 166, to support a Comprehensive Approach to Hunger Relief. I also want to thank your dedicated staff and the caucus staff for all their hard work and professional consideration during this budget process.

As with any budget, we understand that difficult decisions must be made and we are deeply grateful to each of you and the entire Senate for providing this additional investment and support for the programs operated by our non-profit and faith-based foodbanks, food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and site-based programs pantries located in K-12 schools, community colleges, and four-year universities; food distribution at low-income senior housing complexes; and special nutrition screening and support at community and hospital health clinics.

This important investment will pay dividends in expanding educational achievement, advancing worker productivity and improving healthcare outcomes. It will tell the 2 million Ohioans we serve, including older adults, children, families, people living with disabilities and the working poor, that they are not alone, and that adequate, nutritious food is something that no one should go without.

The Senate's additional investment will not only put more nutritious food on the table for our most vulnerable individuals and families it will also prevent food from going to waste in the fields of Ohio farms. Ohio's program of foodbank funding represents the best of public-private-community partnership and is a model among states.

As you know, hunger is a complex problem in Ohio, and it requires a comprehensive solution. Thank you for your diligence and thoughtful consideration during this budget process and we look forward to working with you and the administration to ensure that no Ohioan goes hungry.

Chairman Dolan and members of the Senate Finance Committee, once again, thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your generous support of these provisions that will provide new resources to our foodbanks have expanded services to a historic number of non-profit and faith-based agencies.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully submitted
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