

March 4, 2025

Ohio House Children & Human Services Committee

Written Testimony on H.B. 96

Claudia Toth, Committee Member, Burton Food Cupboard

Chairwoman White, Vice Chairwoman Salvo, Ranking Member Lett and distinguished members of the Children & Human Services Committee - thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on HB 96. As you begin your work on HB96, I would like to provide additional context and information on the **Burton Food Cupboard** and our work being done on addressing food insecurity in **Geauga County**.

Our pantry serves over **350 households each month (about 1,000 individuals)**. We work with about a dozen organizations in Geauga to share resources from food drives, the Greater Cleveland Food Bank and local retailers. We respectfully request additional financial support through the Ohio Food Program & Agriculture Clearance Program to continue providing this critical nutrition and supportive services to the Ohioans we serve. Over the past year, we have seen an **increase in visits to our pantry of approximately 30%**.

Geauga County has been regarded as a wealthy county, yet visits to our pantry rise each year. We share our resources with the **Geauga Veterans Pantry**, WomenSafe, the Amish community (via the DDC Clinic) and a summer lunch program for children.

In the past, cash donations have been used to supplement produce, protein and staple items with eggs/dairy products, condiments, and paper products. As grocery prices increase, fewer of these items can be provided. We are fortunate to collaborate with local hunters to provide venison to our neighbors. Local garden clubs provide extra produce in the summer.

Supporting a meaningful increase to the Ohio Food Program & Agriculture Clearance Program will allow Ohio's local food banks for food pantries to continue to be the places Ohioans can turn to when in a crisis and allow Ohio's agricultural industry to remain strong.

Your support of HB96 will make a meaningful difference in the lives of our Geauga neighbors.

Sincerely,

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