

**44<sup>TH</sup> HOUSE DISTRICT**

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**State Representative Joshua E. Williams**  
**Ohio House of Representatives**

Chairman Click, Vice-Chair Mullins, Ranking Member Brewer, and members of the House Community Revitalization Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 178 today.

I also want to thank my joint sponsor, Representative Troy, for reintroducing this legislation this General Assembly. As he stated in his testimony, this bill would ensure that qualifying seniors in Ohio receive a minimum SNAP benefit of \$50 a month. After seeing their monthly benefit plummet to only \$23 a month, our seniors deserve to know their basic needs will be met month to month. Coming out of a period of rising inflation, the state should not allow our most vulnerable populations to remain food insecure.

According to the Ohio Association of Foodbanks<sup>1</sup>, grocery costs have risen over 25% of the past four years. This has far reaching impacts for all Ohioans, not just seniors. However, as those 60 years or older make up 1 in 4 food pantry visitors in the state, it is evident that this group needs our help. There are over 70,000 households with members over 60 who receive just the federal minimum of \$23 a month. Legislation like HB 178 is an example of bipartisan, pragmatic problem solving that not only ensures greater food security, but also increases medication adherence and health care savings.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ohiofoodbanks.org/site/assets/files/2933/aging\\_snap\\_-\\_hb428\\_4.pdf](https://ohiofoodbanks.org/site/assets/files/2933/aging_snap_-_hb428_4.pdf)

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With programs like the homestead exemption and those offered by the Department of Aging, it is clear that the state has been committed to helping Ohioans age gracefully and age in place. This bill is another example of how we can do just that, and join states like New Mexico and Maryland to make sure all our citizens are fed. Chair Click, Vice-Chair Mullins, Ranking Member Brewer, and members of the House Community Revitalization Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 178. I welcome any questions you may have.