



**Ohio House Community Revitalization Committee Hearing
Proponent Testimony on House Bill 178
Submitted May 12, 2025**

Good morning, Chair Click, Vice Chair Mullins, Ranking Member Brewer, and other distinguished members of the Community Revitalization Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony on House Bill 178, and thank you Representatives Williams and Troy for introducing this bill.

For decades, local United Ways across Ohio have been deeply invested in ensuring all members of our local communities have adequate access to nutritious food. We proactively support the health of local community members across the state through a variety of public and private initiatives. First, United Ways across the state administer the local allocations for the federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP), which provides shelter, food, and supportive services to individuals and families who are experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, hunger and homelessness. Second, United Ways provide direct grants through our own fundraising campaigns to local emergency food providers to connect families to nutritious meals, expand local food access, and build thriving communities. And third, United Ways across the state manage and financially support Ohio 211, the 24/7/365 information and referral line in Ohio for health and human services.

United Ways from across the state support the enactment of House Bill 178 as it would greatly help meet the health and nutrition needs of some of the most vulnerable residents of our state. Providing adults aged 60 and older with a minimum of \$50 in SNAP assistance would reduce food insecurity, increase medication adherence, and contribute to health care savings.

The current minimum SNAP benefit of \$23 per month falls short in providing adequate nutrition support and this reality is demonstrated in the Ohio 211 program. According to data from United Way of Greater Cleveland's 211 program, which serves Cuyahoga, Geauga, and Ross counties, the number one call for individuals 60 and older in 2024 was for food pantries— over 2,400 calls. Furthermore, data from United Way of Greater Cincinnati's 211 program, which serves Butler, Clinton, Warren, Adams, Hamilton, Brown, and Clermont counties, shows that 323 individuals over the age of 60 from October 2024 to March 2025 requested assistance with food insecurity.

Households headed by individuals age 65 and over are the fastest-growing age group in Ohio— up 36% between 2010 and 2023. According to [United Way's annual ALICE](#) (Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed) report, the number of seniors in Ohio who are unable to cover their basic costs of living has increased almost every year since 2010. Moreover, 49% of all households with seniors in Ohio are unable to afford their basic costs of living, and food is the third highest expense in their budget, after healthcare and housing, at \$748 per month for a household with two older adults.

United Ways across Ohio thank Representatives Williams and Troy for their leadership on this issue and the Community Revitalization Committee for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 178. We urge you to support this bill as it helps address the nutrition and health needs of our growing older adult community members.

Sincerely,

United Way of Central Ohio
United Way of Clark, Champaign & Madison Counties
United Way of Greater Cincinnati
United Way of Greater Cleveland
United Way of the Greater Dayton Area
United Way of Greater Toledo
United Way of Hardin County
United Way of Licking County
United Way of Putnam County
United Way Services of Northern Columbiana County
United Way of Summit & Medina
United Way of Union County
United Way Wayne and Holmes Counties

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