



Ohio Senate Finance Committee
Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, Executive Director
June 8, 2023
Amended House Bill 33

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino and Ranking Member Sykes and members of the Senate Finance Committee thank you for the opportunity to submit written testify on the Senate substitute version of HB 33.

The Ohio Association of Foodbanks is Ohio’s largest charitable response to hunger, representing Ohio’s 12 foodbanks and 3,600 partner hunger relief agencies serving all 88 counties. We appreciate your previous support and ask for your continued support.

Last week, we [released findings](#) from a study that reveal the majority of Ohio foodbank clients are being forced to choose between buying food or paying for other essential household expenses, including transportation, utilities, housing, and medicine and health care.

Ohioans have come to our hunger relief network for help with food more times each quarter in the past year than at any time in our history, even at the height of the pandemic. We provided take-home groceries to nearly 3.2 million Ohioans last quarter, serving 31.9% more people than in the same quarter of 2022. Nearly 60% of the Ohioans we serve are children or older adults. We cannot stabilize and support them without more help. Foodbank clients are already regularly skipping or cutting the size of meals to get by, and more than half report feeling down, depressed, or hopeless since March.

Too many Ohioans are in crisis after more than a year of high prices for food and other basic needs and the end of pandemic-era relief programs. Now is not the time to do harm – it is the time to do more to make sure these Ohioans don’t slip further into instability, uncertainty, and hardship.

TANF MOE and the Ohio Association of Foodbanks third party in-kind contribution

The Ohio Association of Foodbanks has partnered with the State of Ohio for more than two decades, operating two highly successful state funded food programs, Ohio Food Program and Agricultural Clearance Program funded with TANF. In addition, under the terms of an MOU, the state is allowed to count the value of all privately purchased and donated food and the total number of volunteer hours the foodbanks receive. The state then applies this dollar





value towards the mandated federal requirement to meet the state obligations and basic spending level required by Section 409 (a) (7) of the Social Security Act and for the purpose of meeting the state TANF MOE requirements. Thus, permitting the state to count spending by the Association as a nongovernmental third-party organization, reducing the state’s General Revenue Fund obligations that are required to meet the federal minimum mandatory state contribution match requirements.

3rd quarter summary for the Memorandum of Understanding # U-2223-17-0774 Ohio Association of Foodbanks TANF Maintenance of Effort Contribution to State for 2023 Third Quarter Value of donated and privately purchased food between January 1 to March 31, 2023;

Donated food value	\$58,794,287.04
Value of privately purchased food	<u>\$11,132,418.41</u>
SFY 2023 Third quarter MOE value	\$69,926,705.45

3rd quarter 2023 Value of Volunteers, their volunteers’ hours, and the value of \$29.48 per hour these volunteers worked serving at our foodbanks and distribution sites between January 1, to March 31, 2023.

- 18,660 volunteers served.
- 82,123 hours volunteered.
- Hourly value of each hour \$29.48 per service hour
- \$2,420,575.43 total 3rd quarter SFY 2023 value volunteers time donated.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

The Senate Sub HB 33 added a long list of harmful changes to the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The SNAP program is 100% federally funded. Only Ohioans with incomes at or below 130% FPL (Gross) and income at or below 100% FPL (Net Income) are eligible to receive food assistance benefits. These provisions were not discussed throughout the budget process.

We urge the Senate to remove the following harmful SNAP provisions that reduce access to basic help with food and strain our benefit systems at a time where Ohioans need them most.

(JFSCD93) Expansion of mandatory Employment and Training (E&T) to ALL work registrants (between 16–59-years of age, including parents).





An analysis by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimated this provision would put 385,000 Ohioans - including households with 170,000 children - at risk of losing SNAP benefits.

(JFSCD82) Categorical eligibility provision appears to be an effort to impose and restrict eligible households from receiving SNAP benefits if any members of the household receive or are authorized to receive a noncash, in-kind, or other similar benefit, such as childcare.

(JFSCD84) Prohibits ODJFS from ever seeking a waiver of Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) time limits. This provision would strip the state's ability to apply at any time, including during a recession, national/local disaster, high unemployment, mass layoff or plant closure and/or insufficient job openings.

(JFSCD80) Prohibits ODJFS from replacing an EBT card of a household that requests 3 or more replacements within a 12 month period unless certain circumstances have been met at which point the household needs to provide an "explanation" of why they need a new card (e.g. my card was lost, destroyed/damaged/stolen) and it has explicit protections for elderly, disabled, homeless, victims of crime (like skimming).

(JFSCD92) Prohibits the amount of available funds on a SNAP electronic benefits transfer card from exceeding \$2,000. Specifies that if a card is unused or contains a balance of \$2,000 for a period of six months requires ODJFS to deactivate the card. This violates federal regulations which prohibit the state from expunging benefits before 9 months (274 days), and the return of these benefits to the federal Treasury.

(JFSCD85) Mandates mandatory child support cooperation enforcement (for all parties, including custodial parents and caregivers)

(JFSCD83) Requires ODJFS to compile a quarterly report of various SNAP transactions and submit them to the General Assembly.

In closing, Ohioans are in crisis and now is the time to do more to make sure that vulnerable Ohioans can make ends meet and feed themselves and their families.

(JFSCD36) We humbly request the Senate restore the \$15 million per year in GRF included in the House passed version of the budget and support for an amendment to provide an additional \$10.45 million per year in support of the Ohio Food Program and Agricultural





Clearance Program to support the purchase of Ohio-grown fresh fruits, vegetables, proteins and shelf-stable items at a time of record need and sustained inflation.

Thank you for your time, consideration and support and I urge your support for a Comprehensive Approach to Hunger and Health in HB 33.

I would be to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, Executive Director
Lisa@ohiofoodbanks.org
614/221-4336 ext 222 | 614/271-4803 cell

