



## Testimony: HB 33

**FY 2024-25 Biennial Budget**  
**Judy Mobley, President & CEO**  
**Children's Hunger Alliance**  
**June 8, 2023**

Good morning, Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking member Sykes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. I am Judy Mobley, President and CEO of Children's Hunger Alliance (CHA), a non-profit organization dedicated to the alleviation of childhood hunger in Ohio. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony to you today regarding our funding request in the FY 24-25 budget.

I want to ask that the Ohio Senate support the agency's requested increase in our TANF earmark to \$3,750,000 per year (\$7,500,000 over the biennium) as was contained in the House passed version of the budget. We are aware that the Senate reduced proposed TANF spending levels in the Senate substitute version of HB 33 based on sustainability concerns in future biennia. While we are sensitive to these concerns, we would argue that our funding request meets the core requirements of TANF stated in committee to primarily help families with food assistance and childcare. The Committee is correct to recognize the need to spend TANF dollars for this specific cause. In Ohio, food insecurity among children is on the rise. In 2020, 1 in 5 children in Ohio lived in food insecure homes while in 2022 that number has risen to 1 in 4. **And, while there is a demonstrated need for increased investment in the Children's Hunger Alliance, we would, at a minimum, request that CHA's FY 2024/FY 2025 TANF earmark be returned to Executive proposed levels of \$1,175,000 in each year of the biennium which will allow us to directly meet the stated target of TANF spending which is food assistance.**

These funding levels would allow CHA to sustain our current level of work annually providing over 9.5 million meals to children at risk of food insecurity. It would also allow us to continue providing weekend meals to schools where we currently have 128 partners and another 40 schools on our waiting list. There is currently no federal program that supports weekend meals, and we know that many children need this critical food safety net. The increased funding would also allow CHA to expand our summer meal program, providing additional opportunities for many children to access meals during a time of critical need.

We recognize that many worthy organizations are requesting funding in this budget cycle, so your investment in our work is especially meaningful. Our direct sponsorship work leveraged over \$20 million of federal nutrition funds back to Ohio in federal fiscal years 2021 and 2022. Additionally, our advocacy work with schools to increase breakfast participation and our support of summer meal sites directly increases the federal child nutrition funds they receive. We estimate that this adds another \$20 million of federal child nutrition funds bringing the total dollars leveraged to approximately \$40 million.

Chairman Dolan and Committee members, thank you again for your consideration of Children's Hunger Alliance's FY 2024-25 funding request.